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WOMEN THAT PASS IN THE NIGHT

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Women that Pass in the Night

REMINISCENCES

OF THE

PARISIAN QUEENS

OF

PROSTITUTION

THE FIRST OF TWO VOLUMES

PARIS
CHARLES CARRINGTON
13, FAUBOURG MONTMARTRE, 13

1906

Adapted from the French.

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OF THE

FIRST VOLUME

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WOMEN THAT PASS IN THE NIGHT

PART THE FIRST

CHAPTER I

"Panthers." — "Lorettes." — "Nymphs." — "Other-siders." — "La Dame aux Camélias." — "Magdalens." — "Filles de Marbre" and "Filles de Plâtre." — "Heart-breakers." — "Muscadines." — "Night-beauties." — "Biches d'Alger," in other words: "Camels." — "Cocottes" and "Cocodettes." — Names and nicknames, old and new.

It is curious to note the different expressions made use of at different periods to denote the members of the upper *demi-monde* — young ladies who go about in silks and velvets, it is true, and shine resplendent with lace and diamonds, but who are harlots for all that, just as much as their humbler sisters, the street-walkers. They are rather cleaner and a great deal dearer; and there the difference begins and ends.

About the year 1835, "Panthers" was the recognized term for these fashionable fair ones.

The now familiar phrase of "Lorette" only dates from 1840. Roqueplan in his *Nouvelles à la Main*, notes and jokes on passing topics, 1841, writes:

Expelled from the more prudish districts, the fair beings of various ages who devote their energies to the ruin of young men of wealthy families, took refuge in the recently built houses of that new town which is growing up in the district intervening between the extremity of the Rue Lafitte and the Rue Blanche, comprising the new streets of Saint-Georges, La Bruyère, Bréda, and Navarin, and taking its name from that of its principal thoroughfare, the Rue Notre-Dame-de-Lorette. This whole category of streets is known as the "quartier des lorettes," and the young ladies who inhabit them are themselves spoken of as "lorettes" in the phraseology of their haphazard admirers.

A little later on, the students of the Latin Quarter used to call such of their fair friends as lived on the right bank of the river, "Other-siders."

In 1845, Prosper Merimée used to refer to them as "Petites Dames," (Little Ladies), while old-fashioned amateurs of the weaker sex dubbed them "Nymphs." This was a belated reminiscence of the classical mythology of their school-days.

For some time after 1850, the date when the famous play of Alexandre Dumas *fils* enjoyed such phenomenal success, our friends the "Lorettes" used to be spoken of very generally by the name of *Dame aux Camélias*. Soon after, an attempt was made to transform the title "Lorette" into "Magdalen;" but the name did not please the public, and soon died out.

Again, after the vogue of Théodore Barrière's then celebrated play, "Les Filles de Marbre," (Girls with Marble Hearts), they were called by that title, while a popular song of the day ran:

> La vertu passe et marche à pied.
> (And virtue passes, forced to trudge along on foot.)

Regarding the "Filles de Marbre," the great dramatic critic, Jules Janin, wrote,

> 'Tis at Paris they learn by painful apprenticeship the trade that makes women rich in an hour.

In certain circles, criminal circles in fact, they were known as "Accroche-cœurs," or "Heart-breakers," after the little curls lying flat on the temples affected by Bill Sykes and his confraternity and supposed to be peculiarly fascinating. Festeau wrote a song on the subject, with the chorus:

> Sur mes nombreux admirateurs
> Dirigeons nos accroche-cœurs.
> (Towards our crowd of admirers turn we the artillery of our love-locks.)

Between 1856 and 1860, ladies of easy virtue were entitled "Musardines," because they frequented the Concert Musard, when its address was at the Hôtel d'Osmond, Boulevard des Capucines.

In a topical play, or review of current events, produced about the same epoch at the Funambules Theatre on the

Boulevard du Temple, the following catchy lines were sung nightly :

De préférence chaque soir
L'amateur contemple
Les belles d'nuit qui s'font voir
Au boulevard du Temple.

(The best place any evening for the amateur to come and see the "night-beauties" is the Boulevard du Temple).

The appellation "Belles de Nuit," (Night-beauties) is a neat and happy one for two reasons. These ladies, when they have reached a certain — or uncertain — age, like night better than broad daylight as being more advantageous to their artificial complexions ; then besides, it is the name of a flower (in English, the marvel of Peru), that belongs to the night-blooming family.

Xavier de Montépin, in one of his thrilling romances, has nicknamed them, not "Filles de Marbre," this time, but "Filles de Plâtre." (Girls of Plaster.)

A good name, because for ever changing their quarters as they have been doing for some years past in Paris, they dry the plaster in newly-built houses. This done, the landlords are not slow to turn them out, not so much out of regard to public decency, but simply to demand a higher rent from more sober and less erratic tenants who pay their rent regularly.

Somewhat later, "Biches" was the word. This is not precisely complimentary, the expression being merely an abbreviation for "Biches d'Alger," or in other words

"camels," silly animals allowing anyone to mount and ride them.

Commerson, a comic writer, took up the cudgels however, declaring that this label was not an insulting one at all. "This humped animal," said he, "is a sober and industrious creature; how many of the fair denizens of the quartier Bréda can say as much?"

Long before Commerson, Deriège had written: "Life is a desert, with a camel as travelling companion and champagne wherewith to quench one's thirst!"

In 1866, they were called "Pieuvres," (Devil-fish), in reference to the horrible creature so graphically described by Victor Hugo in his great novel, *Toilers by the Sea*. This name really deserved to survive, for once caught it is very seldom a man can escape their dreadful tentacles.

The French magazine *L'Intermédiaire des Chercheurs et des Curieux*, answering to our "Notes and Queries," derives the familiar "Cocotte" from as ancient a source as Plautus, who calls courtesans *Gallinæ* (Chickens), because, adds the learned commentator Savaron, "they are like chickens in their way of dissipating and destroying everything about them" —*quia ut Gallinæ spargunt et perdunt omnia*.

"Cocodette" is also used in the same sense as the "Merveilleuse" of the Directory period (1795-1799), and the "Lionne" of 1830. It is usually applied to the class of women known as "Poseuses," (Women who affect superior airs), or more vulgarly as "Batteuses." This last word is classical; witness the song:

Au lit voilà qu'elle m'engueuse
Croyant que ça m'ferait de l'effet ;
Je lui réponds : tais-toi, *batteuse.*

(No sooner in bed than, thinking to impress me, she starts high-faluting talk. But I reply, " Shut up, don't kid to me ! "

Other names applied in subsequent years are, " Mousseuses, Horizontales, Ondulées, Apéritives, Belles-petites, Agenouillées. " (Sparklers, Horizontals — both of high and low degree, Undulating Lassies, Pick-me-Ups, Pretty Little Ones, Kneelers. This last refers to their posture when ministering to their clients' lust by means of labial pollution.)

Vidocq, the thief taker, called a harlot, "Calège." 'The Calège', he says, sells mighty dear what the more common ' Ponante ' and ' Dossière ' supplies at strictly moderate prices ; her toilette is fresher and her manners better. Her fancy-man is a swindler or a blackleg, while common strumpets put up with some stevedore or carter ."

Ladies of this class almost invariably possess a nickname. Some names and nicknames belonging to a former generation may be mentioned :

Pomaré, Mogador, Maria Sauerkraut, Rose Pompon, Alice of Provence, Clara Fontaine Rigolboche, Tall Pau (short for Pauline), Smiling Maria, Madcap Julia, The Tipsy One, Pale Hortense, Henriette Zou-zou, Finette from Bordeaux, Panama, Georgette Knockabout, Henriette of the Château, Hortense Neveu, Leininger, Anna Gervais, Charlotte Prévost, Athalie Manvoy, the Woman selling coal, Chicardinette, Cigarette, Liza Fine-legs, The

Cherbourg Baby, Cherry Blossom, Gabrielle Love-locks, Zouave Bertha, Scarred Face, Eugénie Grand Thighs, Polly the Duchess, Andréa the Horsewoman, Clarisse de Montfort, Blonde Bertha, Blanche de Nevers, Berthe de Ligny, Marie Duplessis, the original *Dame aux Camélias*, whose veracious career and death inspired young Dumas, Irma from Savoy, Nina Bouillabaisse, Giulia Barucci, Golden-haired Hortense, Cora Boyard, Henriette of Auvergne, Marie Delahaye, Marthe de Vère, Cora Pearl, Marie Pellegrin, Blanche Pierson, Moutonnet, Clara Blum, The Polish Beauty, Adèle Courtois, or The Lovely Dutch Woman, Caroline Letessier, known as the Sentimental Shrimp, Caroline Hassé, Blanche d'Antigny, Anna Deslions, Prelly, Armandine, Soubise (who only recently died at Nice, aged seventy), Baroness de Breuil, Catherine Schumacher, known as "Briar-blossom," Marguerite Bellanger (whose liaison with Napoleon III. is notorious), Rosalba Cancan, Nini Fine Teeth, Eugénie Trompette, Mimi Dance-about, Louise la Balocheuse, Alexandrine, the English girl with the golden locks, Delphine Rivière, Sophie Ponton, Louise the Traveller, Cosy Léontine, Jeanne the Jewess, Eugénie Malakoff, Henriette the Little Mouse, Louise Sauvageon, Delphine Scaffold-Pole, Blondinette Flat-Foot, Marie from Auvergne, Eugénie Chinchinette, Clara Hedge-Warbler, Héloïse Pavillon, Désirée Patchouli, Loving Eugénie, Victorine Stewed Rabbit, Charlotte Corday, Aglaé Hot Chestnuts, Tubby Marie, Pauline the Cow, Lying Louise.

They all have a nickname of some sort or the other,

you see. Without one, their names would never reach posterity at all. Indeed formerly much greater difficulties faced the conscientious historian of gay life than will be the case with his successors of twenty years hence, for nowadays these good ladies possess journals specially devoted to their interests and recording all their doings and wiles with scrupulous precision.

Louise la Balocheuse had the exceptional distinction of being sung in Nadar's verse :

> Pardon ! pardon ! Louise la Balocheuse
> De t'oublier, toi, tes trente printemps
> Ton nez hardi, ta bouche aventureuse
> Et tes amants plus nombreux que tes dents.

(Forgive me, Louise, for forgetting you! You and your thirty summers, your dauntless nose and provoking mouth, and your lovers more in number than your teeth.)

Names of to-day are :

Delphine de Lizy, Hélène de Lancy, Louise de Silva, Isabelle de Lineuil, Betty de Monthozon, Béatrix de Castillon, Marion de Lorme, Emilienne d'Alençon, Henriette de Barras, Schneider de Sombreuil, Lucile Deligny, Francine Decroza, Madeleine de Mégen, Andrée Vignon, Liane de Lancy, Balthy, Marcelle de Monfort, Jane d'Hénin, Alice Fraser, Marthe Vilain, Laure d'Arthès, Laure Heymann, Laure Decroze, Glady, Albertine Wolff, Suzanne Orlandi, Léontine Campbell, Anna de Farville, Madame Poulet, etc.

Nicknames are still as popular as ever :

Constance M..., the "Artificial Flower"; Jeanne de

R..., otherwise known as "Overrun by her customers;" Louise Bl..., "Wideawake;" Alice Rh..., the "Superb Wench;" Butta F..., the "Giddy Goose;" Marie Ch..., "Little Darling;" Luice S..., the "Sign Post;" Mathilde Cl..., "Dot and Go One;" Countess Orachewska, "Silly as a Snipe;" Blanche D..., "Ever Ready."

I only regret I cannot append prices and addresses, as I have done in "Paris-Impur," for the commoner class of women. But interpreters, hotel touts and porters, theatrical employés and flower sellers will readily supply this necessary information, unfortunately lacking here.

CHAPTER II

What is a Cocotte? — "Bullies" in Kid Gloves. — Rustic Retirement of the Place Pigalle.— The "Rameneuse."— The "Allumeuse," or "Exciter of Men." — The Cocotte who fornicates in Company. — Fine Linen or Common Clout. — Mere Silly Animals.— Wanted, a Reigning Sovereign. — The Telephone Trick. — The Invitation Dodge. — An Object of Charity. — The Guard that yields, but never dies. — A fine Practical Joke.

A "Cocotte" is nothing more nor less than a common street-walker who has been endowed with a better stock of go and initiative than her fellows, who are condemned to a never-ending mill-round of night prowling, Lock Hospital, "bully" and gaol. The only essential difference is, that while the latter are dressed in rags from the slop-shop, and go wearily trailing their down-at-heel shoes through the mud of shabby-genteel streets, their only boudoir a not over clean bedroom in some low-class lodging-house, the successful *cocotte* plies her trade in fashionable districts, rents luxuriously appointed rooms, or sometimes a grand house, has velvets, silks, and diamonds galore, servants male and female, with horses, carriages, and motor-cars at command. But the traffic is precisely the same; same ignorance and frivolity; same low tastes and undisciplined passions and same antecedents: a porter's lodge,

or a cobbler's back-shop. She of the street has for her fancy-man and bully, some rough who robs and beats her; her aristocratic sister has some impecunious swell who squeezes her in other ways. He wears kid gloves, but his trade is just the same for all that.

No honest man will shake hands with the common "bully" of the streets; the pimp of high life is received in society; instead of swaggering in disorderly houses, he ruffles it with the best in drawing-rooms, clubs, and at fashionable, restaurants. The only country life the street "bully" enjoys is the rustic retirement of the Place Pigalle, while his swell brother does the round of the most reputed watering-places, Nice, Monte-Carlo, Trouville or Biarritz.

When you question one of these ladies of the upper *demi-monde* about her origin, she will never admit that she was raised in the lodge of a porter (*concierge*), how her father and mother had fond dreams of her making a career at the Conservatoire of Music or on the stage, and how they taught her to look far above her station. Then came her seducer, some unmitigated young blackguard she had played with in the streets as a child; afterwards ruined and disappointed, little by little she had scraped together a trifle of savings and started operations on a grander scale. On the contrary, they invariably make themselves out to be daughters of Staff-Officers brought up at Saint-Denis, or poor gentlewomen seduced by wicked step-fathers, or broken-down governesses. This last assertion, it would seem, is not absolutely without foundation sometimes, for any evening at dusk may be seen prowling

about the Place Saint-Georges a tall, dark girl, quietly dressed, with the academic palms pinned to her blouse.

Her tale is short and to the point, at once alluring and discreet. She merely observes in a low, soft voice, as she passes you, and darting a meaning look, "I live quite near!"

Nothing wrong in that; anybody has a right surely to make an observation to themselves in the street.

A hard life, that of the *cocotte!* Poor souls, they have vowed their lives with touching self-denial and devotion to the physical well-being of *mankind*, and their lot must inspire in every tender heart a profound feeling of pity, mingled with a sentiment of admiration for so much courage and determination. They are the devil's Sisters of Charity. Ever ready to attend the bedside of a rich man, they have overcome every form of physical disgust; no moral sore appals, no social taint rebuffs them — on the contrary, it is an additional attraction.

When a *cocotte* sees her unstinted and conscientious labours recompensed by Fortune, she assumes the fine lady, and spends royally the competency she has amassed in retailing her kisses. But she is seldom really happy and is full of fancies and caprices. She will invite to a magnificent dinner all the clients who have helped her to build up her fortune, eager to survey all together in alignment the men she has known so intimately as individuals. This is the time for endless reminiscences of "auld lang syne."

Of course there are cocottes *and* cocottes, and each set has its own ways of working.

The " Rameneuse, " (Bring 'em home girl), is the fair one of the boulevards, who is called " Beurre demi-sel, " (Salt butter), when she is ripe for the outer boulevards — ready to return to the place of her first début, to come down from Olympus to the Bastille.

The " Rameneuse " has a nest of her own, generally furnished apartments. These are either some private house where retired members of her profession let lodgings, or else her belongings are lent on hire by a dealer who, by way of security, has the rooms kept in his own name till the full payments are completed — which, by the bye, hardly ever happens. More often than not she is on the police lists of licensed strumpets subject to sanitary inspection, but for all that she is a cut above the regular street-walkers. When they go to be examined, their phrase is no longer the old, " I'm off to Montretout — (Show-all). " Nowadays they say, " I've been tickled with the silver poker ! " — the speculum.

The " Rameneuse " *works* all day. By noon she is on her way into central Paris ; if she has not " picked up " a man *en route*, she betakes herself to the big Boulevards, from the corner of the Faubourg Montmartre to the Madeleine. Tuesdays and Fridays, market-days in the Flower-market, generally bring grist to the mill. Every time these women see a gentleman going up to a flower-girl, they make as if to buy a penny bunch. Nine times out of ten the man insists on paying for it. They are profuse in their thanks, " It will be a keepsake ! Oh, how good you are ! How sweet they smell ! "

In this way they get into conversation ; cost : five francs or twenty, according to the exigencies of the moment.

The "Rameneuse" does her Champs-Élysées too, like any fine lady, but on foot ; sometimes the penny chairs that line the avenue are crowded with samples of her venal sort.

Under these circumstances the hooking on to the male is the easiest thing in the world. The masculine victim strolls down the shady walk, and passes the whole regiment of venal beauties in review. When he has made his choice, he throws the handkerchief — in other words coolly takes a chair and sits down side by side with the object of his desires.

The preliminary does not take long, I can tell you, and in fact there are some who have regular clients at a fixed tariff that never varies.

Once a man is known as a regular customer, they pull caps for him, especially if he gives a crown-piece to the servant, for mistress and maid go shares.

Some there are who in ten years of this life have never taken a man home. They go to a lady friend's establishment, so as to save the expense of a room, their friend helping them in the same way.

The "Rameneuse" *makes* an average of perhaps eight thousand francs (£ 320) a year, without taking account of the "bilks" she has to do with, and who are put down to the bad debt side of the ledger. This eight thousand francs represents a *clientèle* of propably a thousand gentlemen.

Of late years these women are a deal more suspicious and are not easily caught napping. They demand payment in advance; and have a whole heap of dodges for extracting an extra five or ten francs out of an excited admirer. Here is one that hardly ever fails.

Arrived in her friend's room, she begins by making her "mug" sit down. Then she proceeds to take off her hat, let down her hair, unfasten her dress, and take off her stays and petticoats. This leaves her simply in her drawers and with chemise dropping very low, for with an imperceptible twitch of the finger she has untied the tape fastening the garment at the top. In this costume she takes a seat close — very close — to her man; very often on his knees, and begins to chat. The man's eyes devour her, and like a cunning creature she watches the progress of his eagerness in his face. When she sees he is ripe for anything, she begins:

"You gave me ten francs (a louis, or what not), dear; but you didn't know how well-made and how fresh I was. Come, baby, give me just another ten francs, and you'll see how nice I'll be to you."

This is called the "luring on" or "lighting 'em up" dodge.

The man says nothing, but pulls out his purse with a feverish hand, and often doubles the amount asked — not that he gets anything more for it all, of that you may be sure!

The "cocotte à parties" or group-fornicatress is a recognised prostitute who does not openly "pitch" the

traditional — take [illegible] her man. — Dicky, will you come upstairs with me?"

Her method is more refined. She is generally elegantly dressed, and stopping in front of shop windows, she, by an amorous glance, gets the passer-by to follow her. She does not take her "friends" home, but to a special class of house known as "houses of passage." Such a house is exactly like any other to look at; yet there exist in Paris a considerable number of owners of house property, men of the most irreproachable character who would be unutterably shocked by an indecent expression, drawing a large income from one or two rooms the concierge lets out in the house, at five or ten francs each time, according to the district and general appearance of the place. Even supposing some unfortunate indiscretion lets the respectable neighbours into the secret of this charming traffic, the concierge-janitor would take all the responsibility on his own shoulders. As for the landlord — why! just think what a respectable man, an Official, a Churchwarden, and a pewholder, with a "good lady" as immaculate as himself!

The cocotte calls this "doing a short time."

The cocotte "à parties" always make a great display of faultless underlinen — it is her way of advertising herself. On account of this, the waiters at the hotels, when speaking of her, know her as "Starched Petticoats," while they call a common trollop, a "dirty dish-clout."

When the cocotte goes on the stage, she becomes a "grue," (silly goose.) As a rule, they are stupid creatures

with pretty faces and figures, who are ready to put up with the hard immoral life as they are too unintelligent to make headway otherwise. At any rate, it is warmer behind the footlights than in the streets; besides they have a chance of getting to the front and showing off to advantage, so that the amateur can see at a glance if he will have his money's worth.

Managers make their profit out of prostitutes on the boards. They get pretty girls for very small salaries; while very often these latter make themselves useful as go-betweens in cases of Company promoting.

The cocotte of high life, the "swell woman," apart from her daily drive in the Bois, does not fish personally — she receives callers. Her *flash* companion entices the stranger passing through Paris into her toils. This brand of the profession is highly lucrative when foreigners are numerous in the capital, particularly in Exhibition years.

Reigning sovereigns are their fond dream. They long to fascinate one of them — always excepting of course, the Shah of Persia, now they know his world-famous diamonds are only cut-glass decanter stoppers after all.

Their ambition reaches fever-heat. Nothing less than a crowned head will satisfy them. They wait and watch, certain he will turn up, some night or other, at any rate once in a way, to visit their little private Exposition. Some, to be prepared, have special hat-pegs fitted in their entrance hall, that, when he does the Messiah act, he may be able to hang up his crown with due convenience!

They all envy that famous opera-bouffe actress — Hortense Schneider — who was called in 1867, during the Exhibition Year, "The Princes' Passage," a play upon the like title of an arcade in Paris.

When Royal Blood is about, and kings sniff their bidet-basins, the darlings are inaccessible to common mortals. Their servants have the strictest orders to admit none but Royal visitors — if only they would condescend to ring!

Of late years, Sovereigns of the choicer brands have been few and far between. Still there has been a fair crop of Princelings of Timbuctoo and suchlike far-away climes to console the merry mercenary "tarts" of Paris.

However, to come back to the "Flash Companion." The latter is neither young nor pretty — or she would be "working" on her own hook. She has the eye of a Yankee, and can tell to a cent what a man is good for without so much as looking at his purse. Of a staid and highly respectable exterior, you would take your affidavit she was governess in some highly-connected family. She is still more valuable, indeed invaluable, when as is frequently the case, she speaks several languages.

She has influential connections, particularly among gentlemen of a certain age, younger men offering too great a risk. They are apt to become "stickers," a thing that might easily be injurious to the fashionable cocotte, who is obliged to adopt every precaution to keep her regular customers together, for it is these after all who supply the fuel to maintain the pot in ebullition. Old men, having

mostly a position to keep up in the world, are exceedingly discreet and careful in what they do, and then they pay better and there is nothing to fear from meddlesome parents and guardians.

If the high-class cocotte does happen to go abroad on foot, the "flash" woman accompanies her and affects to be sedulously looking after the "sweet treasure" entrusted to her. And she does as a matter of fact look after her — to see that she secures a good, likely "jay of jays."

She it is who supplies all particulars, settles prices and enumerates the delights in store for the happy man.

Then again it is the "flash companion" who works the "telephone fakement." This is ridiculously simple, but very ingenious all the same.

She goes to a public telephone, in post-office or *café*.

"Hello! Are you there? Please switch me on to the Club des Epatants."

"Right!"

"Are you the manager? Good! Kindly ask Prince Whatyoucalla to come to the 'phone. Tell him Madame Laure Doux-Minette asks for him."

"With the greatest pleasure, madame."

"What can I do for you, madame?" purrs the Prince at the apparatus.

"Madame Doux-Minette and her little friends beg to know whether the gentlemen at the club are in good form."

"All fit and well — tell her, please. How many girls have you got?"

"As many as Your Highness wishes."

"In that case trot down six at one o'clock to the Maison Dorée."

You see, nothing could well be simpler.

Thus, the "invitation act," though a trifle old-fashioned, is for all that very effective and easy of execution. This is how it is worked.

The cocotte, reading in the fashionable papers of the arrival of "distinguished foreigners" in Paris, or else put up to it by her "Companion" who keeps in touch with all the principal hotels of the capital, organizes an evening party, and sends out a number of invitations thus conceived:

Sir,

May I request the honour of your presence at my Musical Evening on the tenth of this month? A young tenor with an organ of remarkable quality will sing.

LÉA DE SAUTOPAF.

On one occasion an invitation of this sort was sent out to a country gentleman from Poitou visiting Paris, whom the papers spoke of as being a bachelor. This was a mistake, as it happened. He was married, and was staying with his wife and two daughters at the Grand Hotel. The head of the family was away, and it was the mother who received the invitation. When the evening came, she and the two daughters, all three in full evening dress, repaired to the cocotte's house, and created a vast sensation on their entrance into her reception room.

The demirep in question, who was of a certain age and her beauty already on the wane, combined with her other avocation that of a very successful procuress. She begged the lady to step into an adjoining room, supposing she had brought the two girls for a deal. Without further preliminaries she asked right out if they had been long in the business, and what her terms were.

Worthy materfamilias was utterly flabbergasted.

"B—b—ut we are not in business," she gasped. "We live in our own Château in Poitou—as you must surely know since you addressed this invitation to my husband, Comte de Poirac?"

The obliging go-between, twigging the mistake that had been made, and being as luck would have it on good terms with the police at that moment, did her best to avoid a scene. She explained to the puzzled mamma that all the ladies in the *salon* were, "were—you understand—actresses. In fact—er—it was—you know, my dear lady—simplest thing in the world!—it was an invitation meant for gentlemen! not for ladies." And there the *contretemps* ended.

Another ruse of quite a novel kind is successfully worked by one of the "Old Guard," the battalion of ancient trulls who yield but never die.

The mummified and enamelled queen of beauty sends out the following epistle to a select number of society men:

Sir,

A poor, unhappy girl, a musician of repute and possessed of a charming voice, has just been deserted by her mother. The child's

father, a scoundrel — but the word is not nearly strong enough to describe such conduct as his — is trying all he can to seduce her. So far she has held out, but how long will she have the strength to do so successfully?

Her artistic future is most promising. You have attracted her attention, and she loves you passionately. She needs your affection to secure her happiness and honour.

Come at once.

LOUISE DE B...

The hour appointed varies, so that different customers may not clash.

Of course the truth is that a poor lass the woman keeps in her service is used in this way as a decoy, and a shameful profit is made out of her girlish body. When the day's work is over, she gives her two louis for half-a-dozen sittings — or rather six bouts of lying down — more or less lengthy and tiring.

Those who penetrate the trick take good care not to lodge a complaint, but they have their ways of getting even.

One of Louise de B.....'s sort was sitting quietly one morning at her toilet-table, systematically and conscientiously "making up her face," to hide the ravages of time and debauchery.

A vigorous pull at the front-door bell. The maid opens, and returns to say it is a young man asking to see Madame who goes on with what she is doing, and to tell the truth, feels rather flattered at this early unexpected visit. Another ring and another visitor. Then a third, and a fourth. In a quarter of an hour's time, the reception room is

full ; ten minutes more and the dining-room has to be utilized ; then the kitchen. The very stairs and landing were crowded, and the poor concierge did not know what to say, or which way to turn.

At last she appeared, and a general cry rose at her stately entrance. Without losing countenance — it was not the first time she had seen a man ! — she asked to what she owed the honour of this visit ?

With one accord, each gentleman drew from his pocket a note to this effect :

Madame Louise de B... begs Monsieur X... to do her the honour of calling at her house on the 15th inst. at 10 a.m.

She saw it once it was a practical joke, but never found out the perpetrator, who is at the present moment a very well-known journalist.

CHAPTER III

A Luxury, not a Necessity. — Bailiff Specialists. — "Amer Picon." — Her "darling boy." — "Right enough for *grub*, but.... the other thing?" — A Howling Swell and a Rascally Clerk. — "That's no Sight for a Sheriff's officer!" — A new Place for keeping Diamonds in. — A Fine Aroma. — The "Moulin de la Galette," at Montmartre. — Amateurs of a "good catch." — Successes and Failures. — The Way it's Done.

The cocotte, whether great or small, whether successful or the reverse, has her ups and downs, even when still young. Being merely an instrument of pleasure to the man who pays her; simply the creature of a passing caprice; a bit of extra swagger he allows himself; a luxury, not a necessity, she is as often out of work as in. Then as economy is far from being her strong point, the day the "masher" goes, the "bum" arrives. The bailiff, horrid creature with his pair of dirty myrmidons, comes on the stage; and then follow atrocious scenes, a very battle of savage Redskins; the one struggling desperately to elude the talons of the official vulture, the other to lay hands on the jetsam and flotsam the wretched woman has managed to secrete to turn an honest (?) penny by

their sale so as to tide over the hard times till the arrival of better days.

Some bailiffs make a speciality of cocotte business and they are the hardest-hearted of all. Their claws may be decently covered with kid gloves, but they are as sharp and cruel as anybody's.

There is one in particular, a man whose name recalls that of a certain widely advertised appetizing bitters, who is notorious for his ingenious expedients, and who sticks at no ruse that will serve his ends.

A swell cocotte, famous for her ready wit, had been left stranded by the "friend" who "kept" her, offended by a too frank retort on her part. She was with him at Trouville in the season. One day he had business of importance to settle in a [illegible] town of the South of France. Before leaving, he gave his mistress a very liberal sum for all her necessary and unnecessary expenses, telling her to be "very good." The dear creature promised all and everything, and kissing him finally good-bye, called him her "own darling boy."

He was away a fortnight. At last one evening he returned unexpectedly, licking his chops at the idea of the feast he was going to enjoy after such a long fast. He rang the bell, and rang and rang for a good half hour.

"Poor little girl," he thought to himself, "truly she sleeps the sleep of the just."

Eventually the door was opened, and darting into the bedroom, he threw a rapid glance of inspection round the apartment. She pretended to be fast asleep, but alas!

noticing the position of the pillows which she had not found time to re-arrange, he understood in a moment she had not been alone. He shook her roughly, and she sprung out of bed in her night-dress that showed through its gauzy texture all the beauties of her person and her pink, living, quivering flesh. She was for throwing her arms round his neck, but he repulsed her savagely.

"You were not alone?" he cried.

"I beg your pardon, darling! I was."

He pointed to the pillows and then to a short pipe lying on the top of the commode.

Her eyes fell; she was fairly caught.

"Your conduct is as bad as bad can be," he went on reproachfully. "You wanted for nothing; I left you a sum more than sufficient to keep you going till I came back."

"Quite right!" she retorted, "you took good care for my *grub* — but how about the.... other thing, eh?"

He was knocked all of a heap by this repartee, and left the girl in disgust.

The painter-fellow who had provided the... other thing, was a poor man of no great account. She lived with him some time, and eventually returned to Paris utterly done up in every sense of the term.

It was not long before the news of her breach with her rich protector spread among her tradespeople, who came swarming to the scene of action, while it positively rained summonses. Our friend, the bailiff "Amer" was instructed to distrain, but all his efforts and enquiries only resulted in the seizure of a few sticks of worthless furni-

ture. For all that he met her one evening blazing with diamonds at the theatre. He went a second time to her rooms to carry out the seizure; he searched the furniture, turned over the mattresses, looked everywhere, and found — nothing! Where the deuce could the famous diamonds be? Bailiff "Amer" could not sleep for thinking of them; they tormented him past endurance. When at last he did get to sleep, he would wake up suddenly with a start, get out of bed in his shirt and go prowling round his room, possessed with the hallucination that he was going to find the diamonds somewhere about. One night he burnt his fingers at the night-light in the water-closet, thinking he was putting his hands on a brilliant.

Finally, baffled and exhausted, he had an inspiration.

His clerk was a handsome lad, an Adonis from the provinces, and what is more from Gascony, a fellow of spirit and not overburdened with scruples, the last quality being a *sine qua non* for an embryo bailiff. His master summoned him to his sanctum, and addressed him thus:

"Would you like to sleep with a young and pretty woman, one of the most famous *cocottes* in all Paris?"

"Why, certainly!"

"Here's five hundred francs (£ 20). You must pretend to be a howling swell, and make the running with her. She will take you home to sleep, and you will take care to notice where she hides the diamonds. At the customary hour I will appear, and you will tell me where they are."

The programme was carried out the very same day.

Next morning, about ten o'clock, bailiff "Amer" ar-

rives, and rushes into the bedroom. The poor girlie was sleeping calmly in the arms of the rascally clerk; but at the noise the officer made they both awoke.

The clerk at once sat up in bed with the words:

"There, sir! there," pointing up at the same time to the tester of the bed, for that was the mysterious hiding-place.

In a furious passion she sprang out of bed and "bonnetted" the treacherous clerk with a chamber-pot full to the brim!

All bailiffs, however, are not possessed of the resourcefulness of Monsieur "Amer," nor are all clerks such arrant knaves.

Towards the end of the Second Empire there lived in the Rue de Rennes one of the finest women in all Paris. Her hair, of a natural red auburn, was the admiration of artists; she was the very ideal Rubens dreamed of. She was a "kept-woman," the mistress of the Secretary-in-Chief at the Prefecture de Police.

She was an out and out high-stepper, equal to squandering all the gold in the whole world. She was over head and ears in debt, and all the bailiffs in Paris were on her track.

She was the owner of a fine collection of really magnificent jewellery and her rooms were sumptuously furnished. Yet when the officers of the law came to distrain, not the smallest vestige of a precious stone was ever visible.

One day she was pursued hot foot at the instance of

a low money-lender of the Rue Montyon. The Sheriff's officer arrives, attended by his men and his head clerk, the latter being specially charged to hunt for the famous jewels. The clerk, a festive young fellow very well known at Montmartre under the *sobriquet* of "The Bilk," pushed his way into the bedroom, while the officer was making his inventory in the reception room. He found the mistress of the house lying on a sofa quite unconcerned, and asked her straight out where the jewels were.

She rose, touched a secret spring in the woodwork of the bedstead, and pulled out a drawer. There lay the diamonds.

"The Bilk," dazzled and impressed, shut the panel to again instantly, saying:

"That's no sight for a Sheriff's officer, I tell you!"

And the diamonds have never been seized to this day.

Another *cocotte* was not so fortunate. On going to bed she had put a quantity of jewellery in a vase on the chimney-piece. Early in the morning she heard her maid open the door, and immediately twigged who were her visitors. She only just had time to spring out of bed, toss the jewels into the chamber-pot, tuck up her night-dress and sit down on the utensil in question. The officer came in immediately afterwards; common decency told him to withdraw, but men of his profession know nothing of decency either common or uncommon. Smelling a rat, he tried to make her get up in spite of her resistance. At last, seeing he was too clever for her, she let fly into the

vessel, which she then handed all smoking to the man. He had to hold his nose with both hands, poor man, but at any rate he had the consolation of seeing with his own eyes a very fine posterior, a sight some amateurs would have given a good round sum to enjoy.

All the same she paid him out, in a not very fragrant fashion!

In England an enactment of the law protects women of notoriously immoral life.

A creditor cannot seize dresses, underclothing, nor jewellery, *such articles being recognised by the Law as appliances of the women's trade.*

The swell *cocottes* often have a little fun, generally on a Sunday, at the Bal du Moulin de la Galette.

This is held at the very top of the Rue Lepic, at Montmartre. To get there is a mountain ascent!

This name comes from some remains of old windmills, which, according to the legend, already stood there in the days when the good King Henri Quatre laid siege to Paris and was the lover of the fair Abbess of Montmartre, Marie de Vauvilliers. One of these windmills is still in existence, and bears an ancient date cut in the stone. Is it authentic? Well, some authorities say yes; others, no, and all have convincing reasons in confirmation of their opinion.

However, the frequenters of the locality reck mighty little of archæological questions. They care nothing for the past, and precious little for the future. The present is

what interests them, and their motto is "Ho! for a good time!" Are they so far wrong, I wonder?

The dancing hall is situated at a fine altitude — I know not how many feet — above the level of the Boulevard des Italiens; and its code of morals rises superior to ordinary prejudices by at least that same amount of feet. I do not mean to say the *cancan* reigns supreme, and that a careful mother could not possibly take her unmarried daughter there. In fact, the uninitiated see nothing on the surface of things to reprobate.

Shopboys come here in search of cheap amusement — the price of entry is only ten sous (five pence). These are the "fancy dancers" who give life to the entertainment, and they are the most steady supporters of the establishment.

Besides, there is a good sprinkling of amateurs, old dandies, and exhausted, mummified Don Juans, who repair there in hopes of "picking up something good." There is no lack of opportunity; "game" is plentiful. The only difficulty is to choose, and indeed a man must be very hard to please who comes away unsuccessful.

Caps and aprons are forbidden. The lynx-eyed manager is as stern as Cerberus and enforces this order strictly. They cannot even be left in the cloak-room, as used to be the case at the old "Reine Blanche" dancing-rooms. Perhaps after all this is a necessary measure of precaution to stop the ladies "throwing their caps over the windmills!" (1)

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(1) *Jeter son bonnet par dessus les moulins*, is the French way of saying a woman has gone to the bad; or has abandoned all restraint.

Fashionable *cocottes* come back to the old Moulin de la Galette where they made their first *début* long before, to " cut a dash " before companions of former days who have not come to the front. They love to display their startling frocks and above all their diamonds and precious coloured stones. They dance just as they did in the old days, calling to mind no doubt how they used to get away early from the workroom on Mondays, leaving with a comrade or at a neighbouring wineshop the little wicker basket that had contained their day's provisions, and which their careful mother filled for them every morning.

How well they remember her scoldings when they eventually got home, hot, red and out of breath.

" You idle, good-for-nothing minx ! A trollop you are and a trollop you always will be, " together with other little amenities yet more prophetic and emphatic.

The answer the little baggages gave was stereotyped and never varied :

" Oh ! I stopped on to finish a pressing job, mother. Coming home, it was so late that I was afraid of the chaps in the street ; so I ran to get home quick, and that's why I'm so out of breath ! "

Good old days, so long ago !

Then, as they enter the ball-room, former acquaintances nudge each other and point and whisper enviously :

" Lucky devil ! see how she's got on. She ain't half pretty, neither — wish we could have the tenth part of her luck ! "

The swell " molls " dance, pulling up their underskirts audaciously to show their tan or black silk stockings, accor-

ding to the time of year, and tiny shoes, brown or black, very different from the cheap boots, thick-soled and down at heel, they used to buy second-hand in the Rue du Temple and be so proud of.

They gladly exchange the Café de Paris or the tables of Paillard in a warm, cosy, scented room, champagne sparkling in diaphanous crystal, for an atmosphere reeking of everything offensive: suetty pomatum, fried fish, strong tobacco, and sweat, while the beverage is a mug of horrible blue-red claret, thick and sour, or a jug of spiced white wine.

They are homesick, and yearn after their native mud, as others do for the country scenes amid which they were brought up.

It is a change for them, and affords them besides the gratification of seeing once more those rough Alphonses of their earlier days who used to beat them so soundly. They like to hang on their arm with little coaxing airs, and display an extravagant daintiness of laced petticoats in a provocative *pas seul*.

Not a few may be overheard murmuring to themselves, "My man was a drunkard and a ruffian — but he was a *man* all the same. He had some spunk and muscle, while my present poor chap — why, you can see right through him!"

The Procuresses ply their trade there on a very extensive scale, renewing their supplies of tender, fresh meat. These matrons are easily known by their general resemblance and looks. Loaded with jewels, wearing clothes at

once shabby and showy, as a rule got up as a blonde, she circles prowling round young girls like a hyena round the carrion it craves for.

She is there to secure supplies for her own select establishment, for the provinces or on special order, and it is a rare sight to see the way she gets to work.

The public at these dances is exceedingly mixed. There is something of everything, from the old painted harlot, her face daubed with red like a cartwheel, on the look-out for an easy customer not too proud to take a damaged article on favourable terms, to the vicious child in her teens whose short frock shows a pair of thin little legs in dirty, untidy stockings.

The "hooking-on" is done very discreetly. For the ordinary spectator, there is nothing out of the way about the men and women who appear to meet by pure chance and walk away together, but for the minute observer, for the initiated, it is quite another thing — a sight full of sadness and bitter reflexion. It is managed in the adjoining garden quite as much as in the dancing hall, and it is generally the woman who accosts the man — if trade is bad.

The "Moulin de la Galette" has been the cradle of not a few celebrities, amongst others, of "La Sauterelle," (The Grasshopper), and "La Goulue," (The Gluttonous Girl), and above all a very pretty hussey known as "Clair de Lune," (Moonlight), a pupil of "La Sauterelle's." For these good, high-kicking ladies have pupils like any other artiste; and no doubt the time will come when they

will earn certificates as at the Academy; honourable mention for pretty steps; bronze medal for waltzing; gold medal for the *pas seul*. Our "moonlight" minx would certainly carry off first prize from all competitors. Her saltatory efforts are by no means vulgar; it is actually modest. She makes a point of showing only just enough of her underneath kingdom of white thighs and snowy calico to excite the wish to see more. Her motto, they say, is *Da lucem ut videas*, "Hold the light to see."

CHAPTER IV

Parisian dancing-rooms. — The "Élysée-Montmartre," the "Moulin-Rouge," and the "Chat-Noir." — An interesting classification. — Cosmopolitan vice. — Old Hands. — Two Famous Cocottes: "Corkscrew" and Jeanne Blin. — Marchandon, the Murderer. — Parisel, the "Great Frenchman." — An unexpected Honour. — The Duke and the Dhudeen. — Two *dear friends* and their little Difference. — Lisa and the puzzled Porter. — The Mysterious Sausage.

Of all the Parisian dancing-rooms and places of amusement, the "Elysée-Montmartre," the "Folies-Bergère," the "Montagnes Russes," the "Moulin-Rouge," the "Divan Japonais," the "Abbaye de Thélème," the "Chat-Noir," or "Black Cat," and the "Jardin de Paris," are perhaps the chosen haunts of the high-class cocotte. She and her sisterhood frequent these places at once for amusement and business. Of course there is an infusion of women of a less "crummy" sort, but they are in a minority.

Sometimes one, sometimes another, of these localities is prime favourite, according to the fashion of the moment. Just at present, first place is held by the "Divan Japonais,"

or "Japanese Lounge," held by the poet Jehan Sarrazin; the "Moulin-Rouge" — "Red Windmill," on the Boulevard de Clichy — and the "Abbaye de Thélème" — "Abbey of Thelema," named from Rabelais — saved from shipwreck and extinction by M. Bonhomme, ably seconded by Paul Borelly, formerly manager of the "Helder" café and supper-rooms.

This gentleman has seen a bit of life, and knows Paris by night and by day. Unfortunately, he is nevertheless as dumb as a fish. "Professional etiquette!" he ejaculates with a tomb-like air if you question him: "professional etiquette seals my lips." Worthy citizens who come to the "Abbaye" for their little larks may have their fling, each in his private room, without fear of tell-tales.

The fashionable *cocottes* have unanimously adopted Montmartre — though I can hardly think this is due to the convenience of the windmills being there, as it is many a long day since any of them had a cap to throw over them!

At Sarrazin's "Divan," they all attend the nightly concert up to eleven o'clock, and are among the foremost to organize the "Kentish Fire," and bawl out the time-honoured catch:

> Napoleon died at Saint-Hélène,
> At Saint-Hélène Napoleon died;
> If he had never died at Saint-Hélène,
> At Saint-Hélène he never would have died!

Poor Sarrazin may beg, pray and implore for silence,

even storming and scolding, it is all one, they simply sing on and laugh in his face.

He pretends to tear his hair — a pious fraud, for he has lost his wool long ago, racking his brains to find rhymes in those graceful sonnets of his, which will be famous some day, as well as his volume of short stories, and his novel, "Le Journal de Jane."

After eleven, his patronesses go downstairs to the subterranean hall to hear Clerville. There they stay till two o'clock in the morning, going on afterwards to sup at the "Abbaye de Thélème," where they will fight for the privilege of being waited on by Athènes, (nothing of the "modern" Athens about him), or by Gregorio, as well known a figure at Montmartre as his fellow-countryman in Italy: Garibaldi. My sirens are certain to find desirable victims there, if they have not already done so at the "Divan Japonais," though this is a rare occurrence, the headliners of fashion having "taken up" Jehan Sarrazin, that highly artificial, not to say decadent, poet.

The "Elysée-Montmartre," as the other places of entertainment mentioned above, are the regular rendez-vous of "distinguished foreigners." A visit to Paris would be incomplete without a pilgrimage to each of these shrines.

A colleague of mine has tabulated the notes of a young "Horizontale" of his acquaintance who keeps a record by double entry of profit and loss, with marginal notes added, in connection with her very cosmopolitan *clientèle*. Here are the results:

"The American comes in at a run, and does not even

remove his hat. No kissing and no talking. Good paymaster.

" The Englishman always looks sheepish. Put all the lights out and shut your eyes. Five minutes' talking. "

" The Italian has all the candles lit up. He prefers " beauty unadorned, " and gazes long and lovingly. Rather giving to " bilking. "

" The Spaniard falls on his knees, and would fain make the sign of the cross before .....praying.

" The Negro remains always a negro, though his aspiration is to grow into a white man some day. A strange, exotic creature.

" The Chinaman waggles his pigtail, and mumbles the nests of love on a woman's bosom as if they were all birds'- nests. "

To complete the list :

" The German starts by lighting his pipe, settles his spectacles on his nose, takes off his topcoat and waistcoat and puts them on the back of a chair ; carefully unfastens his braces and then.... asks for a glass of beer. Not a thief exactly, but exacting to a degree. Never satisfied he has got his money's worth ; wallows like a pig.

" The Belgian — ' just for once, my dear, wath will you let me have it for ? Meat's very cheap in Brussels, 'pon my word of honour ! ' Florid in style, and for ever ejaculating, ' That's the way, my dear, we annex France to Belgium ! '

" The Austrian, stiff and starch in his tight clothes,

seems afraid of snapping in two all the time, and does his duty with judicious slowness.

"The Turk — a gentleman you need to know to turn over quick with. Bad payer, dangerous customer generally. To be avoided.

"The Greek. Be careful how you leave him alone in the hall. Look up your jewels, make a definite bargain and see he pays you in advance. The costume he prefers is a pair of black silk stockings and garters with steel buckles. Easily pleased.

"The Arab. Allah have you in his keeping, my sisters!

"The Russian is very open-handed and generous. A devoted amateur of female charms, but never stays all night. He loves France for her fair daughters' sake.

"The Brazilian. All "bilks" without exception. Lucky if he does not nab the forks and spoons; generally gets a dinner out of you gratis, on the plea that he loves simple family life and hates restaurants.

"The Parisian pays little, and asks for nothing. On the contrary, he takes what he wants.

"The Provincial Gentleman has only one idea, to get you to lend him a night-shirt, and when he is in bed to hide his purse under the bolster."

The "Elysée-Montmartre" and its ball possessed in the good old days of Mabille and Bullier neither its present reputation nor its present public. It was simply a minor dancing-saloon, of the same class as the "Reine Blanche," or the "Elysée Ménilmontant." Its *clientèle*

came from the surrounding district and consisted of work-girls in their Sunday clothes, prostitutes and bullies. After the unaccountable disappearance of almost all the well-known dancing-halls that were the joy of an earlier generation, the "Elysée-Montmartre" underwent a complete transformation and has become a recognised resort of fashionable iniquity. Swell women abound; the choice is every bit as large as in the slave-market at Constantinople, the only difference being that here they offer their wares for sale themselves — whether to the advantage or otherwise of the purchaser's health is open to question!

The dancing is a mere pretence; in other words, nine-tenths of those present content themselves with walking up and down and visiting the refreshment counters. Directly the orchestra strikes up the opening measures of a quadrille, groups collect round the two or three couples that condescend to dance, and this *blasé* audience merely looks on. Always the same sort of thing — a woman more or less good-looking and well-made, generally with irreproachable foot-gear, kicks her leg as high as she can in the air, in a stupid mechanical way. It is a coarse, vulgar exhibition in the worst taste, but it pleases many of the *habitués* who estimate approximately the woman's prowess in bed by the contortions she is capable of, and the suppleness of her limbs.

The disappointment is often severe, and an amateur's satisfaction never bears any proportion to the price paid.

Old hands never make their final choice during the evening. The fair ones are too exorbitant in their demands,

always hoping so long as the place is open to secure a swingeing good price, so they wait till closing-time. Outside the doors, they " spot " their preference, and as a rule the bargain is closed satisfactorily on very much reduced terms. Sometimes the *cocotte* intends to " do " the open-all-night restaurants, in which case she makes short work of her would-be admirers.

The " Elysée-Montmartre " has had before now its dancing celebrities who have won for themselves a high place in the world of gallantry and a great reputation in flash circles.

Some have become famous actresses, whilst others are the proud possessors of fine houses and horses, and live like duchesses.

A very pretty woman and a beautiful dancer, well known by the nickname of " Corkscrew, " was one of the great celebrities of the Elysée-Montmartre. Intoxicated with her vogue, she came down from the heights of Montmartre and made a brilliant, meteoric apparance at the " Casino-Vivienne. " One day she disappeared from public view, and her comrades learned to their unfeigned surprise that she had started housekeeping in true Bohemian style with a young painter.

She became a new creature under the influence of " true love, " and broke entirely and for ever with her old ways of life. She managed her lover's house excellently, and was quoted as a model of domestic virtue.

Her end was a tragic one. One morning, in order to clean a window in their apartments on the first floor of a

house in the Rue de l'Abreuvoir, she had climbed on the balustrade of an outside balcony. Some noise startled her, and losing her balance, she fell into the garden below in such a way as unfortunately to break both legs. With the most careful nursing, she was in a fair way towards complete recovery, when getting up too soon after the accident, inflammation and purulent fever supervened, and carried her off in forty-eight hours.

Curiously enough a celebrated danseuse of the old Mabille days pronounced the funeral oration at her tomb.

Another celebrity of another sort is constantly to be met with about town. This is Jeanne Blin, once the mistress of the murderer Marchandon, who was executed for the notorious affair of the Rue de Sèze. She changed her name and now calls herself "Jeanne France." There was already a sham sculptor of the same surname among us; the two make a pretty pair!

All frequenters of Montmartre knew Parisel, a fellow as long as a fast-day, a huge, gawky giant with enormous feet. One of his boots would have served Professor Angelici admirably as a case for his mandoline. His *sobriquet* was "The Great Frenchman."

The origin of the title was as follows. On one occasion he had managed, goodness knows how, to slip in as one of M. Ferdinand de Lesseps' suite on his way to attend some opening ceremony or other, at, I think, Buda-Pesth. They were received with almost regal honours, part of the programme being the presentation by a young lady of a magnificent bouquet of flowers to M. de Lesseps, the

briar, that he had once picked up from a *café* table where it had been forgotten by a ragged drunkard. His cup of happiness was full when, sitting cosily in a comfortable armchair, he could smoke it leisurely and scientifically. One evening, for he made a point of always emptying and filling his pipe with scrupulous care, he noticed to his disgust it was half full of a different sort of tobacco. He sprang up in a passion.

"Great Scott!" he shouted, "what pig has been smoking *my* pipe? If it's your confounded Duke, can't he afford himself a twopenny halfpenny pipe? Tell him, I'll open a subscription at the 'Chat-Noir' to buy him one!"

This Mdlle. L..... had a villa at Granville. Every summer she used to carry down to the seaside with her a queer collection of people — her lover, the inevitable Parisel, and other kindred spirits.

One fine day, Granville was honoured by the visit of a celebrated singer, a "Lesbian" and one of the most famous of the sisterhood. The instant she heard of her arrival, Mdlle. L..... wrote to her, "Expect me on the stroke of midnight!"

The singer, not wishing to throw away her evening, went to bed with Parisel, thinking a little lively, animated conversation would keep her awake till the time came. Unfortunately, poor Parisel was more of a smoker than a lover; no sooner in bed than he began to snore like a good one, and the lady soon followed suit. Punctual to the minute, a violent ring at the door bell shook the

house. It was Mdlle L....., who had arrived full of eagerness to kiss her "dear friend." Parisel awoke with a start, and in his flurry leapt right out of the window on the first floor into the garden below, literally in the costume of Adam.

A terrible scene ensued between the two "dear friends." Next day they were to be seen amicably promenading arm in arm. As for Parisel, he spent the night on the sands and had to be off to Paris by an early train the next morning.

Poor Parisel was found one morning some years afterwards suffocated in bed by an escape of gas from a burner he had forgotten to turn off before going to sleep.

Another faithful supporter of the "Élysée," Lisa by name, has quite recently been married. She is said to make a most respectable and steady-going young matron.

A propos of this, I have been told an amusing little story.

One morning, the commissionnaire, who regularly takes his stand at the corner of the Place Blanche and the Rue Fontaine, saw a window on the fourth floor of a neighbouring house open and Lisa appear at it in a dressing-gown.

She beckoned to the gallant commissionaire, who hastened to make his way upstairs. On his arrival, she handed him a small parcel, simply saying:

"For you, my man!"

The worthy son of Auvergne, much puzzled, went back to his usual place, and was not long in untying the parcel.

To his extreme surprise, it contained a Frankfort sau-

sage wrapped up in tissue paper; and, in a separate parcel, twenty-five centimes in coppers.

He smelt the sausage, which looked pink and appetising to a degree. It had a most lovely smell, peculiarly seductive and delicious, as if it had had a short boiling in broth *flavoured with salt fish* instead of white wine.

"The lady is very kind," thought the Auvergnat. "I will eat the sausage for my breakfast, and the five sous will serve to wash it down with a half-pint of the good wine my fellow-countrywoman, Dame Cambournac, has on draught at the "Trusty Waggoner" over the way!"

When twelve o'clock came, he ate his sausage, and found it so exquisitely flavoured he could only lament there was only one.

Next morning, he looked up, and lo! almost to the minute the incident of yesterday was repeated in every particular.

Again he devoured his delighful sausage, without once thinking of asking why the lady of the fourth floor was so generous.

As he was a young man, not badly set up and with a pair of broad shoulders of his own, the idea occurred to him presently that perhaps his benefactress was a widow lady and in love with him; that in order to win his young affections, she was pampering his stomach as being the nearest way to his heart. So he washed his face and made himself spruce, he wore every day in the week his best new jacket of fine blue calico that flashed in the sun, and bought a pair of real boots for 12 fr. 50 c. (9/6) to replace

his country clogs. Thus accoutred, he would climb the stairs day after day for his sausage and his five sous, firmly persuaded that some fine day or other he would be invited in to share it with the fair unknown.

Alas! on the twenty-ninth day the window remained closed!

The poor man was in despair and declined to run his errands rather than lose sight of the window of his hopes. At last, near two o'clock in the afternoon, it did open. He rushed forward and sprang up the four flights three steps at a time. Lisa who had seen him coming, stood on the landing, but alas! with empty hands. She said hurriedly:

"My husband's back from doing his twenty-eight days' military service!"

That was all — and the simple-minded Auvergnat does not know to this day how the sausage acquired such a very delicious flavour!!

At the other similar establishments, the "Folies-Bergère," the "Montagnes Russes," the "Jardin de Paris," and the "Eden-Theatre," the mode of procedure is essentially the same. The trick is always done in the same way; either the cocotte takes her capture home the same evening, or gives her card for the next night.

They call this "doing" a man, just as the butcher's slaughterman speaks of "doing an ox!"

CHAPTER V

Penalties of Old Age. — The Ivied Ruin. — How to be "Beautiful for Ever." — A Daily Torment. — Crow's-feet and the Art of Enamelling.— Dressmakers' Bills; Extravagant Underwear.— An Expensive Night-gown.— Cocotte and Fine Lady.— A Favourite Game; the Shah of Persia and his Strange Adventures. — A Night's Work. — Esther Guimont.— Love in the Latrine, or the Lucky Lamplighter.

Above all things the *cocotte* must never grow old—under penalty of overhearing humiliating speeches such as this:

One of the Old — very old — Guard had a young "friend" and *cavaliere serviente*, who used every day to bring her a bunch of violets surrounded with ivy leaves. She was delighted to wear them, and would pin the bouquet proudly on her breast.

"Why the deuce," asks a good-natured lady friend, "does she wear a bouquet with those ugly leaves round it?"

"Because ivy," replies her companion, "loves to cling to *ruins!*"

This being so, these sirens of Paris leave no stone unturned to put back the fatal moment.

There is a famous *cocotte* now living in the Gay City,

a woman of very fine figure, whose form might vie for perfection of contour with Juno's own. Her flesh is firm as a rock. She needs neither whalebone, nor false calves, nor artificial breasts; everything about her is the genuine article. She wears loose stays that support the bosom without undue pressure; and to encourage the development of the breasts and shoulders, and bring out the plumpness of the arms, she makes use of a lotion cunningly compounded of myrtle, burnet, musk and elder-flower.

To prevent her skin getting flaccid, she uses a wash of alum-water and alcohol. To preserve her youthful bloom, she takes milk baths, on leaving which her maid rubs her all over with a sponge soaked in iced water. She then washes face and neck in a basin filled with rose-water, essence of jessamine and orange-flowers.

But this is far from being all.

As she possesses very pretty hands and tiny feet, every night on going to bed, in order to preserve the whiteness and delicacy of her hands, she fastens them by means of little bandages against the bed-posts which are of smooth marble. When she finds this discipline too severe, she goes to bed in gloves smeared inside with a paste of soft soap, oil of almonds, spirits of wine and musk. Sometimes she is content to merely wear at night a pair of ordinary white kids. To guard against the slightest roughness of the cuticle, she adopts a lotion of lemon juice, vinegar, and sparkling white wine.

These torments are repeated daily, and really touch the

heroic. Up to the age of twenty, she never got into bed without having first bound up her feet and ankles in tight bandages.

She considers " enamelling " as something altogether beneath her.

" Enamelling " is not, as many people suppose, an improved and elaborated form of " making-up. "

Women who are getting " crow's-feet " about the eyes, submit to the following operation. Incisions are made in the skin, and certain days drugs injected which penetrate and puff out the tissues, and in so doing fill up the offending wrinkles.

Famous practitioners of the art exist both for men and women.

However, our friend employs more efficacious means.

It is a serious matter. The neck gets longer and more scraggy every day ; the horrible crow's-feet disfigure the temples, while silver threads appear among the auburn tresses.

What art and patience, what infinite care, are needful to keep back the wrinkles that are coming with express speed and bear up against the weight of sixty years of hard living !

Every night on going to bed, she applies to her face two slices of raw beef—the rump is the best part—to counteract that withered look of the skin. However, as this operation dulls the complexion, the colour must be brought back by some other means. For this purpose, she rubs her cheeks with beetroot juice, strawberries, or

mulberries distilled in tincture of benzoin; or else with a lotion of the same mixed with a few drops of arsenical extract.

For the hair, more trouble again.

She brushes it twice a day, and cleanses it every morning with a wet sponge. To prevent it falling off, she uses regularly for her tresses a pomade made of boxwood sawdust, spirits of rosemary and nutmeg.

To get rid of those hateful silver threads, she uses a colouring composition of gallic acid—extracted from gall-nuts—and sesqui-chloride of iron.

Pretty well that for trouble—and all to preserve a semblance of vanishing youth and beauty!

Next to the "enameller," the people that chiefly occupy the *cocottes*' thoughts are the dressmaker and dealer in underlinen.

As to their dresses, anyone can appreciate as they go by on foot or driving, but unless we have the "oof," it is out of the question to explore the regions "underneath" and realise the unheard-off sumptuousness of underwear they go in for. It is only from occasional revelations in Courts of Justice that the ordinary mortal gets a chance of penetrating these mysteries. Such revelations positively make the mouth water.

To take an example: Madame P....., who kept a well-known emporium for ladies' underclothing, had supplied Cora Pearl with 32,000 francs' worth of underwear. The unfortunate debtor still owed her something like 4,500

francs, and the hard-hearted tradeswoman had a writ served on her. Items in the account were : a sheet costing 1,250 francs ; then a whole host of bed wraps, of alls hades and colours : black, mauve, pink, cochineal, lilac, capuchin, bears' ears, pigeon's breast, bottle green, Veronese red, Sganarelle yellow, and actually Bismarck brown !

Some were cut one way, some another, some were " full " and some were " tight-fitting, " but nearly all were described as " most becoming. "

Still this bill sinks into insignificance beside one recently presented by a fashionable dressmaker against a well-known actress, who plays many parts, on and off the stage.

Here is a copy :

Bedroom jacket, surah shot silk, best quality, shrimp colour, ribbon trimmings	200 fr.
1 dressing-gown, white barège and grey taffeta, trimmed flounces and fine pleated tucks	200
1 do. red crèpe de Chine, lined rose-pink Indian silk, trimmed lace and ribbons.	550
Figured and embroidered table-cover, guipure lace edging.	150
3 cambric night-gowns, trimmed insertion and Valenciennes lace.	750
1 déshabillé, pink surah and gauze	500
1 morning-wrapper, yellow taffeta	230
2 pairs garters	36
1 do. à la Pompadour	18
1 lawn night-dress trimmed insertion and deep Valenciennes lace	480
1 day chemise, plain yellow, trimmed insertion and Valenciennes lace, of which one small piece furnished by Madame.	400

It would take a joint-stock company surely — to meet all these liabilities!

The *cocotte* apes the fine lady. Some give baccarat parties; others go in for brilliant conversation. A game of the Empire, called " Secretary, " and ressembling the Anglo-Saxon " Consequences, " has come into fashion again of late, and is played everywhere.

You take a big sheet of paper, and each player writes down a sentence without knowing the preceding phrase. This hotch-potch produces miracles of ineptitude, and sometimes very amusing coincidences.

Subject: the Shah of Persia. Now for the result:

" The Shah of Persia lost himself one day out shooting.

" He met Sarah Bernhardt who was dinking absinthe with General Boulanger.

" The Minister of Justice ascends the tribune and speaks with striking eloquence.

" But wishing to go skating on the lake in the Bois, they all fell into the water.

" From there they went on to the " Eden Theatre " to see " Orphée aux Enfers; " this little dissipation had been preceded by a cheap dinner at Duval's.

At dessert, La Goulue, the notorious *can-can* dancing girl, is married to the President of the Republic.

" Meantime, Mdme. Sarah Bernhardt had attracted the Shah's attention, and on reaching home, found eight white horses in her boudoir.

" The parrot never left off repeating, 'Make her happy ! Make her happy !'

" At the same moment a revolt broke out in the Seraglio, and the Shah was informed by telephone that his twelve hundred wives insisted on appearing on the stage of the Folies Bergère.

" All pointed to an appalling tragedy, and as a matter of fact when the police officers entered the house, they found Fregoli standing erect amid thirty corpses.

" Ruined by the Panama scheme and deserted by his wives, the Shah takes a stall and peddles patent cocoa at the International Exposition.

" He is discovered to be an ex-bully, who had usurped the throne after putting his predecessor to a shameful death.

" Mortally wounded in a duel with Paulus, the comic singer, the Shah summons to his bedside Mary Cliquet, the famous absconding notary and swindler, and dictates his last will and testament to him. The monarch leaves the Bosphorus to Mdlle. de Sombreuil on condition of her preserving the *status quo*.

" At this opportune moment, Barnum arrived in Paris, and taking advantage of the Shah's embarrassed position, made him a side-show at the " Montagnes-Russes, " at twopence halfpenny a head.

" Having at last triumphed over all his foes, thanks to the able assistance of the agent in Paris for Lipton's tea, the Shah returned to his ancestral dominions. To avoid all danger of revolution, he had his people impri-

soned in a State Convict Establishment. His reign was long and glorious."

Cocottes, in the course of their long and devious "man-hunts," meet with all sorts and conditions of strange folks. This is a conversation I overheard once between a certain "Tosca," a demirep not unknown on the Boulevards, and a wag from Marseilles, just arrived in Paris to see the great Exposition.

TOSCA. Aha! a Marseillais; a real live Marseillais! Ducky, come home with me and you'll see how nice I'll be to you. I adore you boys from Marseilles!

The MARSEILLAIS. No! no! the Paris women are no good. You don't understand the things they do at Marseilles.

TOSCA. Why! I'm a Parisienne; I know every mortal thing from the sweetest kisses that penetrate indiscreetly into the strangest nooks and corners of a lover's throbbing frame, down to lingering caresses of soft tapering cunning fingers. Come along home with me. You won't regret it!

THE MARSEILLAIS. Go on! You think you know a lot, but you'll never do it like the Marseilles girls let me!

TOSCA. Well! you can tell me, can't you? What is it they let you do?

THE MARSEILLAIS. I tell you you'll never let me do it as I do at Marseilles.

TOSCA. *(on her mettle)* Only tell me how?

THE MARSEILLAIS. Well, then! At Marseilles, the girls let me do it for nothing! That's how!

Precipitate flight of the *cocotte*, hissing strange oaths.

The *cocotte* is a good business woman, turning everything to profit in one way or another, and despising no source of gain. Her expenses are so heavy.

There are some members of the profession who keep a regularly posted day-book, a current account of affairs of —well! let us say, the heart. One I knew who had written at top as a motto: *Rigolat nec mergitur*, (Merry but Unsinkable).

M. Guilhou, the wittiest County Court judge in Paris, was sitting some few years ago at the " Mairie " of the XIth Arrondissement. One day when the Court was open, a cocotte known by the sobriquet of " The Grasshopper, " appeared to enter complaint against a waiter who in handing her a plate of soup had spilt it all over her dress. She claimed 200 francs for a new " breadth " she had been obliged to have put in.

The guilty waiter was in Court with his wife and four children.

" A 'breadth'? " asked the judge. " What is that? "

This was explained to His Honour.

" Heavens! then what does the whole dress come to? "

The waiter tendered fifty francs; the lady would not yield a centime of her 200 francs.

The point was argued for a good half-hour, till at last the worthy Judge interposed with these words, " Just look,

my dear young lady, at the poor fellow with his four children. Fifty francs is a large sum for him. Come, take it and smile pleasantly. You'll soon make up the difference in one night's.... work! "

Others, like Esther Guimont, when they are getting old and can no longer find a market for their crumbling charms, in spite of the " enameller's " skill in the art of making the most of what is left; in spite of eccentric knickers and every other dodge, levy blackmail with the utmost effrontery. They offer to their former lovers, now married and settled, or their " lady friends " of early days, for a good round sum down, to return them the correspondence that passed in their salad days. The game often answers, and some live regularly by this delightful trade.

In spite of her advanced age and extreme ugliness, this Esther Guimont never left the war-path. If rich lovers ran short, she looked lower in the social scale—that was all. I well remember one adventure that happened to her and which she was fond of relating.

On one occasion she was on the way to Marseilles, and approaching a small station somewhere between Châlons-sur Saône and Tournus, I think it is called Sennecey-le-Grand, she experienced a sensation peremptorily reminding her of the fact that she was subject to the baser needs of poor humanity.

The night was as black as the devil's hindquarters.

When the train drew up, she got out quickly and made

straight for the little locality usually guarded by a female Cerberus and which is so indispensable in every railway station.

But at this late hour the latter was not at her post.

Our travelling *cocotte* dashed open the door, and entered. A second door was before her, which she also opened and made secure behind her—so secure that when she wished to come out again, it was impossible !

The door in question only opened from the outside. After making herculean, but entirely unavailing efforts, she began to knock and call out, softly at first, then vigorously ; finally furiously, for the starting bell now made itself heard and the whistle portending the instant departure of the train.

At this she sets up a wild hullaballoo, but the moving train drowns all the noise she makes, and the instant it is gone the officials are away home instantly, no train being due until five o'clock next morning.

However, after some minutes of suspense, a gleam of hope relieves the gloom of this awful night—she hears steps approaching.

Hereupon she collects her strength for a supreme effort and redoubles her cries of distress.

The first steps were those of a humble lamplighter who was going his last round, putting out the station lights. In a moment he had grasped the prisoner's situation, and answers civilly :

" Wait a moment, madame. I know the way to open door from inside, I will soon let you out. "

With these words he put his ladder against the door, got in by the opening over it, and leapt down, alighting by the side of the prisoner, who was delighted at the idea of a speedy release. Trying the lock, he—finds he is as much at fault as she is!

The confounded lock resisted the pressure of his strong fingers just as successfully as it had the lady's delicate hands.

They began a second edition of shouts and screams, this time a duet; but they might have saved their breath for any affect that followed. No good; they had just to make the best of it.

The man sat down in one corner, took the fair lady accident had thrown so oddly in his way on his knee, sheltered her from the cold as well as he could with his jacket, then..... five o'clock and the dawn came and they were released.

" Never, never in all my life, " she used to conclude, " have I had such a high old time! "

Nor was she ungrateful. The humble lamplighter is now a high official of the Company!

In spite of their crass ignorance of art, *cocottes* very often make pretence of æsthetic susceptibilities. Indeed they are more generous in their dealings with artists than a good many great ladies are—but then we must

remember it is the latters' husbands who pay for their little caprices.

One of the sisterhood heard a great deal about an exquisite portrait of the Duchess de Polignac, represented full length, standing among trees, with a closed fan in her hand, wearing a straw hat and cream satin ribbons; a long mauve sash round the waist of her écru costume relieved by a single red rose at the bosom. Seduced by the accounts she had received of this magnificent portrait, she made up her mind at all costs to have something by the same artist. She obtained his address, and one morning sent her lover to the studio of Eugène Defeuille, the famous miniaturist, painter of the Duchess's portrait.

"I want a fan. How much will you charge me?" he asked the great painter.

"Five thousand francs," (£200), was the reply.

Defeuille painted a superb fan, a perfect *chef d'œuvre* of taste and skill.

One evening a lady closely veiled was shown into his studio.

"I have come to take delivery of the fan the Prince de X.... ordered."

The fan was accordingly given her.

Next day the *cocotte* appeared in company with her lover to take away her commission.

"But I delivered it yesterday evening," cried the astonished artist.

The *cocotte* was furious; but the Prince, who had in-

[illegible] little [illegible] paid up without a [illegible] of [illegible]

[illegible] the ministerial's talent [illegible] shoulders and says [illegible] what he did.

CHAPTER VI

Can a Cocotte fall in Love? — Poor Devil! — Good Resolutions. — A Hellish Life. — An Edifying Conversation. — The "Fancy Man." — A Good Performer. — Cheating. — Napoleon III. and Miss Howard. — Lovers' Chambers. — "I quit her and get quits." — The Prince and the Cocotte. — A "flowery" Epitaph. — Field Marshal "financed" by an Actress. — A Very Remarkable Knocker. — Cora Pearl. — "The General Manager." — "My charge is a thousand Francs." — Time is Money. — A Gymnastic Master's Tariff. — A Russian Princess. — The "Lady of the Lake" and the "Man from Enghien."

A question: is the *cocotte* capable of really falling in love?

Undoubtedly; but it is the exception—a mere momentary surprise of the feelings, a passing fancy, "so much time lost!"

The "fancy man" is a luxury; an amusement for an idle hour, something to fill up a void.

I knew a literary man once, who fell in love with well-known habituée of the "Helder" all-night supper-rooms, where her nickname was "The Coal Woman."

Having met her one evening quite accidentally, he had

incontinently fallen head over ears in love with her. By degrees he got to live with her regularly.

Society, with its usual intolerance, avoided him as if he had been a leper, a Pariah, or a cholera patient ; and he deeply felt the humiliation he had to bear. When he went to his friends' houses, he could not but observe the ironical smile on their lips. They did not say openly, "You are so-and-so's 'true lover', " but he knew well enough what they thought. Yet he had not resolution enough, will-power enough, to withdraw from her fascinations.

He had been as proud as any man once, carrying his head high in the world and ashamed of nothing. Now he went abroad furtively, choosing out darkling ways and ready to submit to anything ; literally anything, rather than lose her. The wretched man would prowl about the muddy street beneath her windows, his temples burning in spite of the winter cold, never feeling the sleet that lashed his face, nor hearing the ribaldry of passers-by who laughed in his face and called him "the frozen lover. " He could not quit his post ; he longed to plunge his gaze into the recesses of her chamber ; the light that [illegible] dimly through the blinds tormented his very soul [illegible]rtured the flesh upon his bones, until he would [illegible] a great oath to kill his faithless mistress. His sobs [illegible] hi[illegible]d his tears flowed unrestrainedly.

[illegible] [illegible]t would be extinguished. The "other [illegible] customer or the regular worshipper at [illegible]ase might be, would slip out of the house

in a shamefaced way, thinking most likely of the wife who was waiting up for him at home, and so the tired gallant cringed away like a criminal, his hollow, empty purse in his hand.

Presently the window would open and a face appear wreathed in smiles. She had made the wherewithal to pay for to-morrow's bread, and now made him a sign that he might come up. At this, darting forward, he would bound up the stairs like a tiger springing on its prey, as she would open the door and let him in. The bed was still warm, the utensil not yet emptied. Furious, he would lift his hand to strike her, but it always fell back again powerless to his side, while his rage melted like snow in the sunbeams, under the over-mastering smile of the woman who had infatuated him.....

Next day, as soon as he was by himself, he would write to tell her he meant to leave her for ever. Ten such letters would be written, and not one ever posted.

Then the old hellish life would begin again, though a little less stormy for a while, as there were supplies for two or three days in the house. But after a time, the brutal reality asserted itself once more, and she would begin:

"But you're not reasonable, my dear man. I have 2000 francs, (£ 80), rent to pay. What am I to come to, if I stick to you?"

"I tell you, you talk like a common pro-

"And you, what are you, I should like

"A fool and a madman, that's what I

" Come, do you suppose I'm going to have my things sold up for such a trifle? "

" You call your life 'a trifle'. You sell yourself to the first comer. You have more lovers than you can count. "

" Bah! you make me sick! Go away! You're a nuisance—a nuisance, I tell you! "

But he would not go away, not he!

Then a friend would turn up.

" Halloa! you've got company? What! Your 'burr' is there still; you must be mighty fond of him! I tell you, old girl, the fellow's your ruin. You're a perfect goose; all the receipts you'll ever get will be 'Mont de Piété' (State Monopoly Pawnshop) ones. "

At this he would take his hat and go, to escape his intense longing to put his foot upon the spiteful toad.

As soon as the door closed behind him, the conversation would be continued between the two women:

" Have you quite lost your heart to him, poor dear? I tell you, at your age, a woman doesn't do these things; and he's as dull as an owl into the bargain. You never used to sulk; now we never see you abroad, and the boy will forget you altogether soon. When you're old, he'll give you the sack, and chuck you sharp enough. "

" Right you are, lovey; but upon my word, I'm sorry for him! "

" Well! well! slip on your things, and we'll dine at the café and go on to the Amateur Rowing-men's Ball. "

She " didn't come home till morning, " and lo! in the morning there he was to welcome her!

Finally he broke his fetters, and was his own master again at last. The woman died in the hospital, while he at this day bears a name that that is almost famous.

Even if these ladies do *not* love fair and square, this does not hinder them from having " true lovers " of a sort, so called presumably because they know nothing of either love or truth.

The " true lover " so called, or " fancy man, " is no creation of this century. " Monsieur, " another name for the same thing, is found in connection with Sophie Arnould, the famous actress, and her hair-dresser, in a contemporary work of 1762.

The Chevalier Desgrieux, in " Manon Lescaut, " is a type for all time. " Monsieur, " as a phrase in this sense, still holds its ground, while some members of the demi-monde prefer to say " the understudy. "

In more modern days, an " Arthur " became the recognised appellation. In 1845, Théophile Gautier wrote on the subject of cocottes:

" This behaviour seems to her the most natural in the world; she makes nothing of having a whole collection of " Arthurs " in attendance, and playing her shiny-pated, white-waistcoated keepers false."

A short conversation between two *cocottes* will make it plain why they do as they do.

" Are you still satisfied with your Louis? " (the fancy man for the nonce.)

" Well, no! not altogether, but he is a good *performer.* "

" Really? You're lucky! "

" Why, certainly! He's not like my City friend: he doesn't want pick-me-ups to start him. But I hope you've got a nice chap too in the background? "

" You know, with one's customers, it's all nothing; it only tickles and excites me. Then later on, if I haven't a man handy, I have to resort to the 'minister of the interior,' (the middle finger) you know! "

" Oh! but that's cheating! I keep it all for my 'fancy man!' "

The true " fancy man " is intrepid. When his mistress find herself subject to a certain incommodity that will occur periodically to the best of young women and which she indicates to a too eager aspirant by the words, " No good, my dear, to-day; it's a case of Flowery Land, " he lives up to the sentiment of the famous song:

> " Il est aussi brave
> Que sensible amant,
> Des Anglais, il brave
> Le débarquement. " (1)

All " true lovers are not professional " bullies, " but all " bullies " call themselves " true lovers. " Still there are exceptions to every rule.

The species is found among all ranks of society, high, low, middle-class—everywhere.

The adventurer who was destined later on to be the

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(1) A brave and tender wight,
He'll brave the *bloody* fight.

Emperor Napoleon III. had inherited only a very moderate fortune from his mother. His expensive journeys from end to end of Europe; the friends who rallied round him and who were as poor as himself, soon drained his purse dry.

As long as his aunt, the Grand Duchess Sophie of Baden was alive, she supplied his necessities with much liberality, but after his escape from Ham, he found himself in London in possession of a grand capital of some ten thousand francs (£ 400) or thereabouts, which his foster-sister, Madame Lorme, had remitted to him. Fortunately for him, he made the acquaintance in the course of a few months of Mis Howard, who provided lavishly for his expenses.

He owed this lady, at the date of the Coup d'Etat which was the starting-point of his greatness, not far short of eight millions of francs (£ 320,000) — truly a high-priced article in the " fancy man " line!

But as a matter of fact, the Emperor paid up like a man, and even did more, offering her the magnificent estate of Saint Cloud which he had just bought from Madame Piscatory, making it yet more extensive than it was before by throwing into it five or six adjoining country residences with their grounds.

A near relative of Napoleon III., the Duc de Morny, lived for a long time with the Comtesse Lehon, who housed him in a wing forming part of her mansion in the Champs Elysées, and which every Parisian knew under

the name of "faithful doggy's kennel," — "lover's chambers."

After the Deux Décembre, the Duc de Morny paid *his* debts too in his own way with an epigram that is not yet forgotten, "Ouf! je la quitte et je m'acquitte!" ("Phew! out of love and out of debt!" or, "By quitting, I'm quits!")

To keep in the family, do they not say a certain Prince has a rich and generous friend in Mdlle. Valtesse de la Bigne?

When he left the paternal roof, his father said what amounted to:

"I haven't a notion what my son proposes to live on, but I have every reason to suppose, knowing nothing to the contrary, that his income will come from some disreputable source."

Will Mdlle. Valtesse be as lucky as Miss Howard was? It is open to grave doubt.

Nor must the Comte B.... be forgotten. Every one knows the delicate duties he performed for the Emperor — the same La Varennes fufilled at the Court of Henry IV. and Lebel for Louis XV.

The "Parc-aux-Cerfs" was located at Saint Cloud instead of at Versailles, that was the only difference; and it was a very convenient situation.

On his death, the following epitaph was proposed for his tombstone:

> "B..... arrives; he nears the Stygian flow,
> All hell's awake to welcome him below."

The noble Field-Marshal M..... was notoriously "financed" by Mdlle L..., of the Variétés Theatre.

When she died, his furniture was sold by public auction. Everything was included, down to her memorandun book of daily expenses.

For years an entry figured in it the first of each month: "To M..., his allowance — 600 francs (£ 24)!"

Most likely in this case her heirs have been paid back.

The Princess Mathilde treated herself, so to speak, to the Comte de Nieuwerkerke, one of the handsomest men under the Empire.

She procured his appointment as Director of the "Beaux Arts," (Department of Fine Arts); but previously to that she had for many years paid all his current expenses — and these were pretty heavy!

It was just like man and wife — with quarrels, reconciliations and all to match. One day, the Princess, suspecting him of having been unfaithful to her, turned the fascinating Director neck and crop out of the house. It was summer time and she was living at a country villa near Paris. In the middle of the night she heard a violent knocking at the bedroom door.

"Who's there?"

"It is I," returned the Count.

"I shan't open."

"If you only knew what it is I'm knocking with!!"

Cora Pearl kept the Comte de Sainte-Aldegonde under similar conditions, for a mere trifle — a matter of a

thousand francs (£40) or so a month. He was the head studgroom in charge of her stables and breeding establishment generally. The servants called him "The General Manager." She had an elegant suite of rooms furnished for him above the stables, and when she came home alone and felt like kicking over the traces, she remembered her stallion, and climbed the stairs to share her stud-groom's bed.

In these same rooms she received several good horse-whippings — treatment she would seem to have highly appreciated.

Mdlle H..., of the Opera, kept the Marquis de V..., a man of a a really good old family. She was no fool, and did the thing well and economically — tailor, bootmaker, horses, carriage, and meals at the Café Anglais.

Ferociously jealous, she used to go month by month in person to settle the accounts.

To keep her "friend" out of the way of temptation, she used to hand him a louis every evening, and he had to give a strict account next morning of how he had spent it.

A certain singer — no need to give his name, enough that his voice is quite gone now — found a protectress on his first coming to Paris who was fondly devoted to his interests.

She furnished him a pretty little flat in the Rue de Provence, bought him a dog-cart — this was the fashionable vehicle just then — and provided him with a sufficient income to cut a dash.

He soon became the darling of all the women in town, and broke with his patroness.

Then the ungrateful wretch started to " fool around " pretty extensively.

One day, Mdlle. Duverger, a celebrated actress-courtesan living under the protection of Prince Demidoff, invited him to supper..... and the rest.

He answered with cynical candour:

" Dear Comrade,

" I have such a large number of invitations similar to the one you have been kind enough to give me as to compel me to keep myself for ladies who are ready to give me solid reasons for believing in their good will. You know the proverb, ' Time is money. ' My charge is a thousand francs! "

Women are such fools! She actually paid the sum demanded. She took her money's worth, however, for it was three weeks before he was in a condition to pursue his highly respectable calling.

L...., the celebrated gymnastic master, asked even larger sums for his *séances*.

The price fluctuated between a thousand and two thousand francs, though sometimes mounting as high as five thousand.

Truly expensive fish, that needed a sauce of very exceptional quality to make it go down. Yet he was not without customers. One day, a Russian great lady, the Princess W.... thought she would treat herself to a bit —if we may use the expression. He made difficulties

merely as a matter of form and ended by sleeping with her for five thousand francs.

Whether it was he was touched by the magnitude of his conquest, or that the lady had been extra agreeable to him, any way next morning he returned her the five thousand francs in bank-notes with the following letter enclosing fifty francs over and above :

" Madame,

" You are the only woman I have ever given money to. Every Sunday I will come and sleep with you and pay you a like sum.

" Yours, etc...

" L..... "

When he did present himself at Madame de W....'s, doubtless her caprice had passed, or perhaps she had been less satisfied with him than he had been with her — at any rate she had him put outside the door without a word of explanation.

He had no luck, for once in his life apparently, that he had ever paid a woman!

A good story to conclude with about a " fancy man. " It was told by Watripon; the heroine was known under the name of the " Lady of the Lake, " (of Enghien), but her real name was Madame de F....

She had taken as lover a young—very young—Prince of royal blood, but being kept under the strictest discipline by his friends, he could only see her by stealth. To console herself for the Prince's long absences and fill the void in her aching heart, she took as her " fancy " a cer-

tain artist, now famous. She rented on the banks of the lake of Enghien a lovely little villa; where the young Prince used to come to pay her a hurried visit every Sunday. Meanwhile the artist would row his boat about the lake.

One summer's day — a day of quite tropical heat — the Prince found means to slip away, and arrived in all haste. Madame de F... was boating on the lake with her lover. To be more comfortable, he had left his things at the villa, and his entire costume consisted in a pair of trousers and a flannel shirt.

The maid caught sight of the Prince coming, and made a signal to her mistress who hurriedly sprang on shore, while the artist rowed away with all his might.

Several hours later, the Prince expressed his wish to stay and dine. The painter, sick to death of boating, and as hungry as a hunter, wanted to return to the house, but the servant who was on the watch informed him by signs that the Prince was going to sleep at the villa.

So the unfortunate man had just to make up his mind to take the train back to Paris in white trousers and flannel shirt!

For many a day, in memory of the misadventure, he was invariably spoken of among his fellow artists as "The Man from Enghien."

CHAPTER VIII

[illegible]

Many [illegible] married [illegible] all men on the [illegible] who hope to obtain from them some [illegible] the results of their long experience and [illegible] young nim[illegible] who they have managed, lik[illegible] to wrangle in their web. A [illegible] conscience ready to [illegible] thing, and incapable of disgust or [illegible]

Among the most renowned prostitutes or pr[illegible] one, sometimes the other — turn and [illegible]

— Angèle Bardin, known as the Baroness d'Ange (1) is in the very first rank.

At the time of her death in 1888, one of my best posted fellow journalists, Georges Montorgueil, contributed the following notice of her to the pages of the newspaper, "Paris."

"All Paris knew this woman, who drove so infamous a trade and such a famous pair of horses. Every day she sallied forth in her victoria, which she drove herself with an *aplomb* the insolent stares and ill-concealed smiles of the passers-by did not in the least affect. She took her place in the long line of equipages, as much at ease on her driving-seat as on the ottomans of her home in the Rue Saint George. She would be pointed out to the country cousin with a "Look, the Baroness!"— though some begrudged giving her the title, consecrated by long custom.

"She drove on meanwhile without exchanging greetings with a soul. She followed the trade of a fashionable procuress, and the elegant crowd that surrounded her included most of her clients. 'Professional etiquette' demands of course the very utmost discretion, while the flourishing condition of her business justified a little scorn on her part. Who, pray, paid for her horses, which were the finest in

(1) In a little brochure, now of extreme rarity, which appeared in 1861, under the title of "Paris qui Danse," (The Dancing World of Paris), mention is made of a Baroness d'Ange as being a constant attendant at the "Bal Robert," on the Boulevard Rochechouart, a dancing-hall then in great repute. At the same date, a Baroness d'Ange is spoke of in the "Mémoires de Rigolboche."

Paris? Who paid for her jewels, dresses, and all her magnificence? Who but the men of the gay throng that circles round her, and which reimbursed her in good gold, in the privacy of her own house, for the slights they put upon her in the streets, at her hour of self-advertisement.

"For an advertisement it was, this driving out in the face of the world. For twenty years she was her own poster, forcing the most demure to read as she passed; the most virtuous to remember her name. To make an impression on Paris, and above all on the *blasé* world of fashion of Paris, a trader *must*, whatever his business, imitate Alcibiades and cut off his dog's tail. Only a way of speaking this, for the good Baroness would never have consented to such a mutilation, or that of any caudal appendage whatsoever, having found an excellent equivalent. Her dashing turn-out, her sounding title, her phenomenal success in her infamous trade, put her at once on a plane by herself, while the cynical effrontery of her method of advertisement, this apotheosis of vice promenading from three to five in the line of equipages passing under the Arc de Triomphe, marked the possession of something approaching commercial genius. Even her rivals, the Phryne girls of the Bois, in the height of their youth and beauty, could not but envy and admire this adroit practitioner who had managed to give her trade-mark a world-wide repute.

"She was not a Parisienne. 'Lyons is my birthplace,' she wrote once to someone who has asked for a few lines of autobiography from her pen. It was to her dignified way of doing things she chiefly owed her success. Her

drawing-room, which the police kept an eye on, was a rendez-vous for a constant succession of young girls, her pupils, quite young ladies, well-bred, modest and blushing damsels, saying with an occasional relapse in the agitation of the moment into the slipshod pronounciation of their childhood, " Oh, sir, if mother knew I was making up to you like this! " In this sort of white slave dealing she amassed her colossal fortune. When getting on in years, she afforded herself the luxury of a young husband. He used to show up sitting by her side in her carriage, to the amazement of the Parisian public, far from being over particular as a rule. "

The Baroness d'Ange had many strings to her bow. She was a tender heart, and loved men, women, animals, each and all. She was a true philanthropist, and the happiness she bestowed on humanity in simply incalculable.

She had as " bosom friend " a very agreeable woman; it was " pure affection, " as it is not in a few cases. For all that, on certain days, and certain nights, they would have desperate quarrels, even coming to blows; then make it up again and be closer friends than ever.

The " friend " kept a favourite dog, a magnificent black poodle, while the Baroness had one of her own to match, but fawn-coloured. Both dogs were admirably trained, and would have made the fortune of any circus. They were especially good at washing up dishes.

Whenever the Baroness had a grievance against her " friend," and her friend against her—and almost anything made a grievance, if one or the other stayed too long

talkking to a gentleman or a lady visitor, a quarrel was certain to break out before long — the two dogs began to show their teeth and growl savagely at each other. When from mere abuse their mistresses came to blows, the two great poodles used to dash at each other furiously and bite fiercely, each championing its own mistress.

The story is perfectly true, but why think evil? Everybody knows how a faithful dog loves its master, and above all its mistress!

The Baroness d'Ange had a numerous *clientèle*. Friends would give each other her address, and mutually recommend her establishment. On one occasion, a chemist and druggist from a provincial town arrived at the Baroness's. The local solicitor had recommended him, and told him before he started, "Say you come from me. Mention my name, and don't give more than five francs." Now that very day it so happened the poor Baroness had a carriage accident. Her horses had bolted in the Champs Elysées and she had been pitched out, losing in the confusion a diamond earring valued at 12,000 francs (£ 480). Being very fond of money, she felt excessively grieved and savage at what had happened.

The worthy chemist asked to see the Baroness, and followed his friend's recommendations in every respect. When, however, he came to speak of the five francs, she sprang up in a rage, called him a "mug" to his face and asked him if he took her for a common street-walker? The unfortunate man was utterly flabbergasted, and could only stammer out in reply, "Five francs is a hundred sous, you

know; and that means a liniment, two goes of emetic, one bottle — of cough mixture and a poor man's plaster! "

"No!" said the Baronesss, premptorily; "make it ten francs, or nothing. How can you offer a woman a paltry crown-piece who's just lost twelve thousand francs? At this rate it would take some time, and I should have to let a jolly lot of men's members go through my hands, thighs, and lips before I could make it up again — my word!"

The chemist was for making off when the Baroness, who had thought better of it on further consideration, said:

"Well! now, if you like, I have a rather pretty maid, in training. She's not bound like me to keep her prices up. I'll call her if you wish, and you can give her five francs!"

"By all means," said the worthy tradesman, and he found the soubrette very much to his taste.

"Ah, well!" thought the Baroness, "after all, going halves, it's half a dollar to the good!"

To return to the husband. This obliging individual belonged to an old and respectable family, which, sorely vexed at the *mésalliance*, got the marriage annulled on the plea of some irregularity.

Still it is to be supposed the Baroness found merits of a high order in her mate, for just before her death she made a will in his favour.

This was impugned before the Courts by the Baroness's family, the plea alleged being that, having no husband, her will in his favour was *ipse facto* null and void!

The family lost its case, and the husband enjoyed in peace and conscious rectitude the lady's fortune, which she had so laboriously acquired as the result of her nightly labours!

Here is the will in extenso. I can guarantee its authenticity, and it is a document that well deserves preservation.

LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF THE BARONESS D'ANGE.

"Done before Maître D...., Notary Public, of Paris, and in presence of the below-named testamentary witnesses, who sign as follows:

(Here are the names and addresses of the four witnesses).

"All the four witnesses aforesaid, summoned at the request of the testatrix hereinafter named to assist the Notary undersigned, being of full age, French citizens, in full enjoyment of their civil and civic rights, and not being related or connected either with one another or with the testatrix herinafter named, and possessing all qualifications required by the Law for the validity of the present Will and Testament, as they have individually declared on the demand of the said Notary undersigned,

"Duly appeared:

"Madame Marie-Angèle Bardin, of independent means, domiciled at Paris, No. 16 of the Rue Saint Georges, and at the present time a patient at the Medical Home of the Augustinian Convent, No. 29 of the Rue de la Santé.

"Who (the said Marie-Angèle Bardin to wit), sick of body and bedridden, but of sound mind and memory and good judgment, so far as appeared to the Notary and witnesses undersigned from her conversation and discourse and the clear and precise declaration of her intentions, has in view of her apprehended demise, dictated to the said Maître D...., Notary Public, in presence of witnesses, her Will and Testament as follows herein set down:

"I affirm myself to have been married in England to Monsieur J. B...., man of letters, domiciled at Paris, No. 16, Rue Saint Georges, and to be in present process to legalize my marriage in France.

"I appoint as my residuary legatees, my father, Jean B..., domiciled at Roanne, (Loire), Route de Charlier, district of Saint Roch; my mother, Marie-Antoinette S., domiciled at Roanne, Route de Paris; and my sister, Benoite B..., wife of Monsieur B..., also domiciled at Roanne, Route de Charlier. I leave them my fortune, for their sole and only use in three equal parts, and I hereby ask them to carry out all my wishes.

"I bequeath to Monsieur J. B.... a life-interest in my house, No. 16, Rue Saint Georges, at Paris. I wish this life-interest to be inalienable by him; and further that no creditor be able to distrain upon any of the revenues therefrom, my declared intention being that the said life-interest be indistrainable.

"I likewise bequeath to him under the same conditions and by way of a life-interest only, the furniture and moveables of every kind; the horses, carriages, silver,

pictures, works of art in bronze, and all the contents of the house, always excepted securities and money, whether in notes or gold. He will keep and maintain the dogs until their death.

"As for my diamonds, I wish them to be sold after my death, by my testamentary executor acting alone, and the sum realised to be employed for the construction of my tomb, in which shall be interred myself and my husband in the Batignolles cemetery.

"I wish my nephew, Henri L..., not to benefit by my will; I leave him only one of my rings as a Remembrance. My testamentary executor shall choose which he shall have.

"I bequeath my watch to Mdlle. Charlotte M...., another to Madame Bardin, widow, my sister-in-law. I bequeath likewise to the same Madame Bardin free rooms, of a letting value of 400 francs (£ 16) per annum, in my house in the Rue Saint Georges, for the term of her natural life.

"I desire that the amount which shall accrue to my relatives be deposited in the bank of France by my testamentary executor, who shall remit to them the interest thereon.

"I have an investment of about 3000 francs (£ 120) in the hands of Maître Closez, Judicial Officer, of the Rue Lafitte; it takes the form of a sleeping partnership in the business of Monsieur Salzat. Of this amount I leave a thousand francs to my godchild, Charlotte M...; a thousand francs to Madame Bardin, widow, my sister-in-law;

a thousand francs to my maid B....., and the remainder to Louise H....

"As for my carriages: two to be selected by Monsieur J. B.... shall be sold for the benefit of my coachman; but they shall be sold only when Monsieur J. B... shall think fitting. I leave likewise a ring to Louise H..., to be chosen by herself. Each of the female domestics in my service shall have one of my dresses, to be chosen by themselves by mutual arrangement.

"The rest of my wardrobe shall be sold at the same time as the diamonds, and the sum realised shall be applied to the same purpose. A trunk full of my clothes shall be sent to my mother.

"I bequeath a gold watch or gold chain, at her choice, to Madame B..., my door-keeper.

"I hereby appoint Monsieur Charnant, my solicitor, successor to Monsieur Thiébault, 31, Faubourg Montmartre, my testamentary executor. I hereby give him seizin and express authority to sell and realise securities. The sale shall be made by my stockbrokers—any profits accruing to go to the expenses of my funeral.

"He shall apply 400 francs for masses to be said in the Church of the Augustinian Convent.

"I wish my body to be embalmed and conveyed to my own house.

"I leave to Monsieur Charnant, my testamentary executor, at his choice, a ring or the figure of Ariadne, or the Bacchus of white marble.

"I hereby annul and revoke all previous Wills made by me whatsoever.

"This Will and Testament has been duly done, executed and dictated to the aforesaid Maître D..., Notary Public; who has written the whole of it with his own hand in the same terms wherein it has been dictated to him by the testatrix; did then read it over once and again to the testatrix, who did declare she well understood the same and desired to abide by it as containing her last wishes—the whole in presence of the four witnesses who have made declaration they are neither relatives nor connexions of the legatees therein named.

"Done at Paris, 29, rue de la Santé, in a chamber on the first floor of the Convent of the Augustinian Sisters, lighted by two windows giving on the courtyard.

"Year one thousand, eight hundred and eighty-seven.

"This twenty-ninth of December.

"At or about seven o'clock post meridiem.

"The testatrix has duly signed together with the four witnesses and the Notary, after the whole had been read over by Maître D..... in presence of the four witnesses.

"Signed: BARDIN, M....., A.....,
R....., B....., and
D....., the last being Notary.

("Below is written:)

"Registered at Paris, twelfth bureau, February 2nd, 1888, folio 53, c. 10; received nine francs, thirty-eight centimes, tithe-tax included.

Signed: J.....,
D....."

"N. B. — On the margin is written the following note:

"In accordance with notification received by Maitre D....., Notary Public, February 2nd, 1888, Maitre Charnant has declared his non-acceptance of the office of testamentary executor of Madame Bardin."

This curious will—curious from more than one point of view—is perfectly authentic.

As for the Baroness d'Ange's husband — "his name is legion."

A recent case fought out before the Courts of a provincial town not far from Paris abounds in startling revelations.

One of the members of the profession that makes its living by going to bed once took the fancy of retiring from business. So, crowned with orange blossoms and a sweet virgin blush mantling her cheeks, she got married—and at Church of course. If she did not dodge confession by gifts to the Church or otherwise, and if she told "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," her Confessor must have spent a highly diverting and improving hour and a half.

Maître Cléry, one of our most witty and brilliant advocates, spoke for the plaintiff.

"On the 28th of December, Mdlle. Gabrielle Elluini contracted a marriage with Monsieur E. Abel, one of the most dashing young 'walking gentlemen' on the Paris stage.

"By a deed executed the same day, the bride and bridegroom entered into a contract in which the former appeared as contributing a very considerable fortune to

the joint establishment. As for Monsieur Abel, at that time his affairs unfortunately were in liquidation, and as his contribution to the marriage settlements he had nothing whatever, barring some most pressing debts—sundry gambling debts in particular.

"I am bound to admit there was nothing *ancestral* about Mdlle. Elluini's fortune; at the same time I may mention that Monsieur Abel *was quite aware of its original source,* and that in seeking this marriage his only object was an easy livelihood and a luxurious existence.

"In fact, Monsieur Abel had made no secret of his sentiments in this respect among the members, male and female, of the theatrical world in which he lived. He was often heard to say, he was tired of his present life, and was perfectly ready to marry any woman, one-eyed or bandy-legged, or anything else, provided she had plenty of the *needful,* as he expressed it.

"On meeting with my client, who amply fulfilled this last condition, he resorted to his usual tactics and all the fascinating arts and speeches he was so great a master of. Mdlle. Elluini, whose life at that period glided by in the monotonous quiet of a simple, idyllic existence, and suffering into the bargain from chronic heartache, lent a not unwilling ear to Monsieur Abel's dithyrambs.

"'At last', thought my unfortunate client, 'peace and happiness are within my grasp.' But alas! she was mistaken.

"As a matter of fact, a very short time after the marriage, she discovered that her husband had brought her

an item not mentioned in the settlements — to wit, an unmentionable disease?

"It was at Nice, where Mdlle. Elluini has an estate, that during a drive on the Promenade des Anglais, Monsieur Abel confessed to his wife the complaint I need not further particularize.

"It is as well however to bring proof of what I allege. I therefore produce some highly suggestive doctors' prescriptions, as well as letters in which mention is made of Doctor Fournier, to whose consulting-room, it seems, Monsieur Abel's physician, Monsieur Jules B...., was to accompany his patient."

No one appearing to represent the husband, the Stipendiary summed up his decision at once:

"It is incredible," he said, "that any one could so impose upon the 'simple good-faith' of Mdlle. Elluini, whose character and disposition is an open secret—thanks to her notorious life.

"And I am bound to say I think the plaintiff has shown some effrontery in claiming at this time of day a legal separation. She is actually by way of making a wrong out of her husband's letter to the 'Gil Blas.' But then she began it by her own letter in the 'Evénement,' in which she makes public property of the details of her private life and her marriage.

"I protest against such a claim, and I consider that Monsieur Abel in doing what he did was only acting in legitimate self-defence.

"In the second place she alleges what we have heard

relative to a certain complaint. But Mdlle. Elluini was well acquainted with the world of the stage and the habits prevalent there long before she married Monsieur Abel; and we cannot believe she had no suspicions at all and that the revelations took her entirely by surprise!

"Far from it, she would seem not to have *wished* for a strong, healthy husband. On this point let us refer again to her letter which appeared in the 'Evénement' and in which she thus expresses herself: 'I suffered atrociously, and endured disillusionment. I made up my mind to marry, but I did not wish to be in love with my husband and determined to choose my *antitype*. I am a woman of strong passions, but I deliberately chose a flashy debauchee.'

"Mdlle. Elluini has mistaken her ground when she comes here and poses as a moralist, in face of all this which was prior to her marriage."

Monsieur Abel for his part made no difficulties. He disappeared before the case came on—some time after the marriage—saying cynically:

"I shall resume my life as a man about town; and she may resume hers as a woman of the town!"

Monsieur Abel had not taken proper precautions. Presumably he had not seen an enterprising tradesman's puff which I have printed *in extenso* in another work, "Paris-Impur," and which is accompanied by these delightful verses:

OUR REVENGE. (Notre Revanche).

Words by M. Balochard. Music by M. Bienganté.

Air : *En r'venant de la R'vue.*

Depuis longtemps sur cette terre,
Dans l'ancien mond' comme dans l' nouveau,
Nous avons pris à l'Angleterre
Ce qu'elle a vraiment de plus beau ;
Je veux parler de l'objet dont l'usage
Est pratique même en voyage ;
On peut s'en servir en wagon,
En voiture et même en ballon.

On s'en sert en tout temps,
L'hiver comm' le printemps ;
Et si l'on tient à sa santé
Faut toujours être bien ganté ;
Malgré son titre Anglais
Il n'est pas moins Français,
Car ce petit boyau
C'est notre revanch' de Waterloo.

Et confiants,
Sans crainte d'accidents,
Vous avez là-dedans
Toutes vos aises ;
Messieurs, tâtez,
Voyez les qualités,
Et le bon marché d' mes
Capot's Anglaises.

Vous qui portez du mariage
La chaîne et le boulet fatal,
Maris, qui n'avez en partage,
Que le pot-au-feu conjugal,

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

(" Since many a day, upon this earth, in the old world as in the new, we have borrowed from England its choicest treasure; I mean the little contrivance whose use can be applied even when travelling—it can be employed even in the train, in a carriage, nay! even in a balloon.

" A man may use it every season, in winter as in spring; and if he cares for his health, he should always be well gloved. Spite of its English name, it is French no less, for this little tube is our revenge for Waterloo.

CHORUS. — So confident, with no fear of accidents, you find in it pleasure and safety. Good sirs! pray try; only look at the merits and cheapness of my English hoods. (1)

" You who bear the chain and fatal clog of marriage, husbands who have only the conjugal standing dish to enjoy, if you go out to pick up a conquest, never risk it with unprotected head. For like Francis I., you would soon have to have your..... foot cut off.

" Thanks to this prophylactic, guarding your..... nose from harm, protected quite from colds in the head, safe from all possible hurts, you can with an easy mind lead a gay bachelor life, and gather every night a fair flower of the streets.

" CHORUS,—as before.

" You who have a numerous family, and who fain would not further increase the number of your boys and girls, but still without taking vows of chastity—good sirs! give me your custom, you will all find in my shop one of these wonderful instruments, thanks to which a man may shove in.

" Without risk of seeing grow, increase and overwhelm you, like asparagus in summer-tide, the flood of your fecundity. You will be able every day to sacrifice to love, and yet cheat the census under the very eyes of Government!

" CHORUS—as before. ")

To prevent the possibility of mistake, the accompanying notice is sent *from house to house* along with the song:

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(1) What in England are known as " French letters. " Such is international courtesy.

HOW TO USE THE PATENT PROPHYLACTIC.

Unroll the article over Nature's weapon before opening fire!!

N. B.— It can be used with the greatest ease without the female being any the wiser.

Nevertheless there *are* demireps and even mere street-walkers who succeed in marrying men occupying high positions in society. Marriage, they say, is a sponge that wipes out the faults of the past and gives a woman a clean bill of health and a new virginity. I doubt the truth of this saying, and I ask myself what sort of self-respect can a husband feel when he thinks of his wife's origin and antecedents — the common street?

Then at any moment a man is exposed in society to awkward meetings such as this:

Take the case of "Adèle Big-Bum," (Gros-Cul.)

She was a faithful *habituée* of the Café de Suède only a few years ago. She was so enormously fat that she was known everywhere by the nickname already mentioned, or else as the "Mastodont." She was a blonde young woman of a merry, happy-go-lucky disposition, a true daughter of the "always ready" brigade. She would sleep with any man for a good dinner, and never asked for money. At this rate, as may be imagined, she did not make a fortune.

Once a third-rate acte actor took her with him to Nice. Having had enough of her, he packed up his traps one fine day and left her planted there. Adèle was not one to

find a billet easily; finally she went to Monaco, but she was a bit too well known and they refused her admittance to the gambling rooms.

By dint of having lived so much with pressmen and actors she was much given to writing and dared to call herself "literary." So being reduced to great straits, she thought of her old lovers, at least of as many as she knew by name. To these she now wrote, explaining her sad plight and begging them to send her a little money to carry her back to the Boulevard Montmartre. She dispatched quite a hundred and fifty letters, which brought her in as net result.... one louis! So much for her friends' generosity!

One evening, as she was strolling disconsolately along the Promenade des Anglais, she met a gentleman whose passion was "freaks." He was an ardent admirer of fat women — to such a degree that, to obviate any chance of deception, he had devised an infallible method of verifying the proportions of the particular fair one he hankered after.

He used to offer her a fauteuil at such and such a theatre. If she could not sit down in it, well and good, the business was settled to his satisfaction!

Adèle fulfilled the test. She slept with her friend, the amateur of huge posteriors, who was astonished and delighted beyond measure when he came to see and feel the unprecedented size and volume of hers.

She stuck to him — never fear! After living with him for some time, lo and behold! one fine day he offered her

marriage. At such a consummation she was so astounded she did not know what to say at first; but ended by accepting.

The only thing was those confounded letters of hers and her old comrades of the Café de Suède. But she was equal to the occasion, and wrote to one of her friends in the following terms:

"My dear Titine,

"I told you of the awful stew I was in. I thought I was going to crack up altogether, and would have gladly engaged myself as 'fat woman' at a show, but there was no show on at Nice. I would have chucked myself into the noble river Paillon, but there was no water. What was I to do then? Go into a gay house? But there was none. Work the streets? Lord love you, dearie! there were as many whores as paving stones already.

"Loafing one day on the Promenade des Anglais, I met an old chap. It was M..... You know the dirty old beast, and what his lech is. He went home with me, and has paid all in all, I can assure you, a pretty penny for his little experiments of feeling, pressing, and patting the two hinder globes he adores. Now, open your eyes wide to read the finish. He's going to MARRY me! Marry me, lovey! You can guess my amazement. I keep pinching myself to make sure it's not all a dream. I'm going to be a lady, and a rich lady at that! Instead of begging 'the boys' for a drink, I'm to have horses and carriages, town-house, country villa, shooting-box, footmen, men-servants and maid-servants, and the devil only knows what besides? From being a common prostitute wandering at haphazard from bed to bed, I'm going to have, one all to myself and my very own! Hurrah!

"But—there's always a 'but'—when my old pals hear of my luck they're certain as I'm alive to blackmail me. I've written such heaps of letters that my mug of a hubby might very easily get wind of some of then. You must try ond get back as many as you can for me, and at any cost. Tell the boys to shut their potato traps. Let them know that

their premises open, at the risk of a fine for each offence.

The fact is these night-restaurants are not, as might be supposed, specially intended to supply the wants of ordinary clients; they are rather the refuge of night-birds, drunkards, prostitutes, "bullies," and thieves.

The one class come there to drink, the other to ply their particular trade.

Among such establishments, one has just lately been demolished which will long remain famous in the annals of the "gay" world. It stood on the Boulevard Rochechouart, immediately next door to the old dancing-saloon of the "Boule Noire," now superseded by the "Cigale."

All Paris knew it under its name of the "Clair de Lune." (Moonlight.)

To look at, there was nothing whatever to distinguish it specially from other houses of refreshment on the Boulevard — unless it were the fact that by daylight there was never a customer to be seen. A deathlike silence filled it, and the whole house seemed deserted.

Painted on the glass of the windows facing the street were groups of clowns, the work of a local artist, done in white lead and half obliterated by the rain. These formed a cheap substitute for curtains.

A rusty iron railing, breast high, fenced it in from the street, while behind this extended a row of shrubs, lilac, spindle-woods and the like, stunted, ragged and miserable-looking, languishing in wooden boxes of common deal.

The roots of these wretched abortions, in their efforts to get a little fresh air and freedom, had split the boxes, already rotten with age, that held them, and the soil was littered untidily over the flags. Six feet or so back of the railing opened a large saloon, to the left of the doorway, while within this were a pair of Algerian curtains, filthy, ragged and greasy, stinking of ancient tobacco, stale fish and musk. These were always drawn close together, and gave access to the night-hall.

Towards half-past two in the morning, the place woke up, and arrivals might be seen presenting themselves in groups of three and four at the outer entrance-gate in the railings. A waiter was stationed there, barring the way. After a short confabulation, his scruples would be satisfied and the gate open silently — the hinges were always kept carefully oiled — visitors then crossed the front court and penetrated into the large saloon, which was in utter and complete darkness. The majority being regular *habitués* who knew their way about perfectly, they were not long in lifting the curtains, and going straight into the night-hall.

This was ninety or a hundred feet in length. Down each side and in the middle were marble-topped tables. Along the walls ran benches covered in cotton velvet, while the seats on either side of the central tables were chairs such as are found in drinking bars of the commoner sort. To the left of the entrance doorway stood a piano.

On first entering, one was dazzled by the sudden change from dark to light, as well as by the extraordinary spectacle that met the eyes; and half stifled at the same time

by the fumes of tobacco, pungent scents of various kinds, and last but not least, by a strong smell of damp and mildew which pervaded the whole place.

As soon as the eyes had grown accustomed to the light and the ears had leisure to attend to what was going on, a loud, confused murmur made itself heard, all but drowning the notes of the piano; while a medley of men and women could be seen, sitting about anyhow and crowded together like herrings in a barrel. These were drinking all sorts of strange decoctions, a horrible tipple dignified with the name of beer; sticky, violet-red wine that never had a raisin, let alone a grape, in its composition; fire-water at fifteen pence a bottle, which stood for Cognac, Fine Champagne, Hennessy or Martell, as the customer chose. The slices of lèmon in the hot grogs had been used over and over again and sucked dry at least a dozen times.

These horrible mixed drinks were served up in broken-nosed, split-footed, dirty, gummy glasses, while the men sang and the women smoked, wandering from room to room in search of a charitably disposed customer, male or female. It made little odds which, there was stuff for every taste and each particular vice found its own set of amateurs ready to satisfy its foulest caprices — for a consideration fixed only after much preliminary haggling.

The ladies (?) who frequented the "Clair de Lune" were far from practising the maxim of the famous French actress, Mdlle. Déjazet.

This great and vivacious artiste was one day questioned

why she was so ready off-hand to sleep with every man who asked her:

"Oh!" she answered, "why in the world should I may them pay for what costs me nothing?"

Every procuress in Paris had the wants of the frequenters of this haunt of vice at their finger's ends: man for man, man for woman, and woman for women. These glib go-betweens went there regularly for fresh supplies to meet the next day's orders.

Amateurs of the cheap and nasty brands of sexuality only began to arrive about four o'clock a. m., at which hour the "Clair de Lune" might very well have put up bills similar to those of entreprising drapery establishments — "alarming sacrifices and reduced prices in all lines." The reason of this slump in the voluptuous market was that when the small lights o' love had failed to be switched on at the night-restaurants of the main Boulevards, where they asked as much as five or ten louis for the entire yielding enjoyment of their second-hand bodies, they came on to the "Clair de Lune" and reduced their prices, often coming down as low as a single louis. All said and done, one gold piece was enough to carry them over the morrow, and perhaps an invitation to supper into the bargain, if the gentleman was open-handed, at "Father Tartine's" or "The Bakeries."

This "Father Tartine" is a wide-awake pork-butcher at the corner of the Rue des Martyrs, who keeps his place open all night. He sells the ordinary wares of his trade, but his speciality is "tartines," consisting of a slice of

bread on which is spread a thin layer of Strasburg liver or " Fromage d'Italie "—Italy cheese — a name people will persist in retaining, in spite of the old song:

" A Paris pas de bon repas
Sans charcuterie ;
A Rome on ne connaît pas
L' fromage d'Italie. "

(" At Paris never a good meal without pig's meat in one form or another. At Rome never a soul has heard of Italy cheese. ") (1)

The " Bakeries " is kept by a good lady in the Rue de la Chapelle who — I do not mean the lady, but the shop — keeps open all night. She sells hot cakes, and gravy soup in which Liebig plays the principal part. You can make your supper there, or at " Father Tartine's " either, at a very moderate outlay.

There used to be a similar establishment in the Faubourg Montmartre, and yet another in the Rue Geoffroy Marie. One has entirely disappeared; while the other has had to stop its little game, because — goes the story — there was a certain back room behind the shop only too well patronized, in which little séances were held like those that made the late lamented Baroness d'Ange so well known as an expert of labial pollution.

Sometimes Homeric battles took place at the " Clair

(1) Which is, after all, nothing more than the cheapest *galantine* sold, made up of all the waste scraps and odds and ends of the ham and beef shop, somewhat resembling that marbled mysterious dainty, dubbed " collared head. "

de Lune, " the most ferocious being those fought among " women for women. "

One night I was present at such a combat — an extraordinary and never to be forgotten spectacle.

Seated next to me was a short young man, apparently about seventeen, with flaxen hair cut short, and dressed in a grey suit, short lounge jacket, open waistcoat and tight-fitting trousers, quietly smoking cigarette after cigarette. He kept his eyes constantly fixed on the doorway and seemed to be anxiously waiting for somebody. Suddenly there appeared in the opening between the curtains a very pretty girl, a brunette, elaborately dressed. Her dress was tailor-made, and plainly showed the cut of a fashionable dressmaker. The newcomer was loaded with diamonds. At the sight of her, my neighbour sprung up with a bound and ran towards her; then leapt at her neck and kissed her passionately on the lips. I then noticed that my young gentleman friend was really an attractive lass whose male habiliments were not a little becoming. I was not slow to understand the situation, especially when after they had done kissing, I heard the words half stifled by a languorous sigh :

" Come, come! I have been longing for you such a time! "

The girl came in altogether, while her " dear friend " went to the piano to get her tiny round hat she had placed there, and the pair were on the point of taking their departure, after tossing five francs on the table to pay for what refreshment they had had.

At this instant, another young woman swept into the hall like a whirlwind, overturning chairs and tables on every side of her ; she was as elegantly dressed as the first, and even more bedizened with diamonds. She rushed at our " dear friend " in male attire and gave two such furious boxes on the ear as must have made her see ten thousand stars. This done, she turned with equal suddenness and spat in the face of the other girl who stood motionless with surprise.

The latter, without a word, pushed her " dear friend, " who had recovered her presence of mind and had thrown herself in the way to protect her comrade, roughly aside, and struck her adversary a heavy blow on the nose.

Thereupon ensued an indescribable scene of confusion. The two " inseparables " fell tooth and nail on the fresh arrival, and gave her an awful dressing-down. When at length they could be unravelled, all three combatants were in tatters.

The two " Sapphos " slipped away with all speed, while the vanquished and injured fair one, deceived and indignant, had a terrible fit of hysterics. As soon as her fury was a little appeased, she set to work to cry, while other women present, who no doubt had gone through the same trials, endeavoured to console her.

" Bah! let her cry, " exclaimed a more experienced matron, " she'll piddle all the less! "

However, following the homely proverb, " More cry, less wool, " she was soon fairly calm again. She repaired the ravages of her costume as well as she could, and pro-

ceeded to tell us her story in a few words — a commonplace one enough, like that of all her kidney.

In so doing, she spoke repeatedly of " her love " with a force and realism that made one's mouth water.

One of the most faithful frequenters of the " Clair de Lune " was the " Viscountess. " The nickname came from the fact that she had been kept for a short while by a certain " flash cove " who " viscounted " it like a good 'un through thick and thin. Her reputation as a " Sapphic " taster of her own sex was well established, and she was proud of it, calling herself by the sounding title of " Professor of Female Seduction. " She divided her time between women and playing at cards. She was, and is still, a woman of wit and intellect, who had very extensive relationships with the best of society. True she did not show up in the respectable drawing-rooms of Paris, preferring more secluded private apartments where a complete toilet is not indispensable. She it was who invented this charming definition to express a woman's precise calibre, " She's not worth the trouble of stripping for ! "

Like all persons of her sort, she entertains a lively hatred for women who do not share her tastes, and who are not enrolled in the " National Guard " of which she is the undisputed General-in-Chief.

Our " Viscountess " is not a professional procuress strictly speaking. Nevertheless, besides gratifying her personal tastes, she serves as " go-between, " and has every particular of hidden Paris at her fingers' ends—places of

rendezvous and all such information. She is constantly on the look-out for ladies in momentary straits for money, and has a carefully-arranged and scrupulously-precise tariff of her own. Her profits take the form of a commission on each transaction, the exact amount depending on her fair client's particular social position. To supplement her lists, she keeps a memorandum-book in which are entered the names of "casual" male clients, as well as those of "regular" customers, who all figure therein from the lad at College down to the old greybeard who needs all the herbs of the field in infusion before he can accomplish the shortest sacrifice at the altar of Venus. The book is a very curious one—particularly so on account of the notes appended, of which the following are samples:

"B....., financier, 100.000 francs (£4.000) a year; once a month, a fresh girl every time, must be quite young, 12 to 14 at the outside, and the very thinnest to be had. N.B. Never write to his private address.

"R....., every week, the strongest woman procurable, a hundred francs for only half an hour; no matter about good looks, but must have a big belly.

"Madame de T....., after midnight, on her assembly nights; likes a blonde; red haired girl for choice—above all things not to be scented at all, the genuine unadulterated natural odour or nothing."

And so on for twenty pages, each more improving than the last!

The "general utility" music-mistress in another invention of the "Viscountess."

One of the chief ambitions of every venal little Venus is to be taken for a society lady. There is some excuse for

this in the fact that society ladies do all they possibly can to be taken for *cocottes*.

With this end in view, the very first thing the *cocotte* desires is to appear "musical." Accordingly she hires a piano, at thirty francs a month, on the hire-purchase system. The piano once placed in the most conspicuous position in the room, she must next have a music-teacher. But as the *cocotte* always returns home very late, or rather very early, she generally lies in bed till noon. What with breakfast, and dressing for her drive in the Bois, it is very soon three o'clock in the afternoon, and her piano lesson done for for the day! But though the lesson is abandoned, the teacher is left; so the music-mistress is transmogrified into a "public letter-writer."

It is she who sub-edits the correspondence of these ladies of easy and expensive virtue, for they are great letter-writers. The style is always the same, but there must be some semblance at any rate of decent spelling. This the piano-instructress looks after.

The same versatile personage is also useful as a chaperone on occasion. By these combined trades she may make as much as a hundred and fifty francs (£6) a month. Indeed some of the class save money at it, and end by establishing themselves in as enviable a position as the "Viscountess" herself.

CHAPTER IX

Public Brothels of Paris. — Only a Franc! — An Old Man from the Country. — An Entreprising Householder. — Peeping Tom. — A Prefect of Police Wrong for Once. — An Aristocrat of the Rue de l'Isly. — The " Standing-Dish " and the " Occasional. " — " To Make Herself Generally Useful." — " Short-Timers." — A Fresh Consignment. — " Marie from Brittany, " and the Franciscan's Rosary. — Genteel Bawds. — " Things are not always what they seem. " — An Ingenious Arrangement. — Animal Magnetism. — The God of Mendes.

In an earlier book of mine, " Paris-Impur, " I have given a list of all the Parisian *maisons de tolérance* (licensed brothels), their addresses and the number of the boarders in each seraglio. This list, which is strictly accurate, being copied from an official document, had never hitherto been published. It was greeted with profound surprise on the part of readers, when it was seen that the number of these houses in only seventy-three, and that of the women constituting their *personnel* no more than six hundred and eighty-six !

For a town of the size of Paris this really insignificant figure is astounding.

Our readers' wonder will be greatly modified, however, when they learn that the total of clandestine houses of ill-fame is very considerable, and that notwithstanding the

very low tariff, it is not prostitutes of the lower class who follow this trade. As a matter of fact it is the *cocottes*, some of whom are famous in the world of fast life.

The ever-flourishing trade of the pimp assumes many characters —the midwife, the café-waiter, the interpreter, the commissionaire, a neighbour, a sister, the fortune-teller, the milliner, the woman who touts for orders of jewellery, underwear, or scent. Often it is no other than the girl's own father who sells her honour; the instances of such baseness are numerous. The law-courts have frequent occasion to try the authors of such abominations, but in spite of the fact that the magistrates apply the law conscientiously and inexorably, they are powerless to stem the ever rising tide of immorality.

Not so very long ago, the Criminal Court of the Department of the Seine condemned, in default, to ten years' hard labour an Italian of the name of Bruni, ex-instructor of the children performing as supernumaries at the Eden Theatre at the time—July 1887—when the ballet "Le Cour d'Amour," (The Court of Love), was being played.

Bruni disappeared, declaring he was going to drown himself in the river. He had been in the habit almost every evening, while presiding at the piano, of taking criminal liberties with the little girls he had under instruction.

The particular one who earned him his condemnation was a graceful minx of twelve, by name Marie Molaux, whom, under pretence of getting a rent mended in her tights, he had taken up to his dressing-room, and.... after

Do the police authorities and the judges not know of their existence?

Nothing of the sort, I assure you. They are closely watched; and if they are tolerated—though only until complaints are made against them as being too openly scandalous or for abuse of girls under the statutable age — this is because they are a source of valuable information to the authorities. This is hardly a very reputable way of doing things, but a very useful and necessary one, it appears, for the proper working of the Police administration. Besides women have always been the most effective agents in political intrigue, as well as in criminal investigations. It will be remembered that Pranzini and many other malefactors were captured in consequence of their visits to houses of ill-fame immediately after their crimes had been committed, and a hundred other similar examples might be given.

A retired Prefect of Police, a man thoroughly well posted on the subject, published the following remarks some time ago concerning clandestine haunts of prostitution:

"Differing in this from licensed brothels, they have as a rule no regular denizens, and are not subject to the police regulations.

"Though not officially authorised, they were none the less subjected to a very strict surveillance; and in all cases where not compulsorily closed, it was because on the one hand, the Police had noted them as undeserving of toleration, and on the other, because there were occasions whem the authorities found in them a source of information at once useful, delicate and discreet."

Here the writer makes a mistake—presumably intent-

ional—for these unregistered houses do as a matter of fact have regular denizens.

The list of such establishments is a long one, and it will readily be understood that it is impossible to give a complete one here. Besides, the present book is not intended as a guide for the swine who seek pleasure of this kind. Nevertheless it is absolutely necessary to give some sort of general sketch, if only to prove as a matter of statistics how prostitution spreads wider day by day in our good town of Paris.

In the Rue de l'Isly—I refrain from giving the number—the mistress of the house bears a patrician name, and her " boarders " never omit the aristocratic " de " when they address Madame, until she has really come to imagine at last that she has a right to the prefix. If I mention that the initial letter of her name corresponds to that borne by the Hôtel de Ville to Plaisance line of omnibusses, I have said enough. She chose the Rue de l'Isly originally in memory of the famous victory of Marshal Bugeaud in Africa, and truly some fierce engagements are nightly fought under her roof!

In her establishment, there are two categories of women—the " standing-dish, " and "the occasional. "

The " standing-dish " is the woman who " lives in, " an industrious 'prentice Messalina no amount of hard erotic labour terrifies. Her hours are from nine o'clock in the morning till two a. m. This delicacy is reserved for strangers making a temporary stay in Paris, and is offered them under every conceivable name—Clara, Josephine, Nina,

Anita, and sometimes as the widow of a nobleman reduced to extreme poverty and forced to these shifts in order to pay her children's schooling. According to the fashion of the day, her locks are fair, red, dark brown or chestnut at discretion.

The price, as a Cheap Jack says at the fair, is within the reach of every purse—a louis, a mere louis! with this difference, however, that you pay in advance, and satisfied or not, no money is ever returned on leaving.

The " occasional " is of no fixed class. She comes from the Elysée Montmartre, the Rat Mort, (Dead Rat), the Moulin de la Galette, the Eden Theatre, the Folies Bergère or even the aristocratic quarters of the town.

She is generally served up to the regular customers. For all these establishments have assiduous clients who come there day after day and night after night for a " short time." A " short-timer " in all ranks of this society, signifies a man who does not climb the stairs to the bedrooms!

On such a customer's arrival, his first question is invariably:

" Well! is there anything fresh in to-day? "

If the reply is in the affirmative, the customer asks to see the " consignment."

If he finds one to suit his taste amongst the lot, he pays his ten francs — the regular price for a " friend of the house. " Whatever is paid, the " occasional " always shares it with the mistress of the establishment.

It would difficult to accumulate a fortune out of " friends of the house! "

Another is in the Rue Beaurepaire, a street lying at right angles to the Rue des Degrés—Street of Steps—so styled presumably because there are no steps in it. It is a "house of convenience" like the rest, but known only to a very select number of clients.

Till within a very few years ago, it was run by one "Marie from Brittany." She was so entitled from her habit of always wearing the costume, from white cap to wooden shoes, of a peasant woman from Concarneau or Roscoff.

Marie helped personally in the business when there was a full house. She knew how to satisfy all-comers, no matter what their demands might be. She was not the woman to run in one special groove only, being a practical person fully realizing the truth of the proverb, "A mouse with only one hole is soon caught!" She could turn more ways than one—that was certain.

Marie had one rather curious peculiarity. When customers arrived, she was always found engaged in telling her rosary. This was a row of magnificent beads which an Italian monk of the Franciscan order had once left in pawn with her when unable to pay for the dish of voluptuousness he had enjoyed under her roof. Whatever the particular task she undertook for a client, she never let go of her faithful rosary, and had a pious *Ave Maria* always on her lips.

Her prices were pretty high, though they were more or less modified according to age and sex.

Most of these genteel bawds carry on their trade under

pretence of highly innocent and respectable callings. Thus in the Rue Grange Batelière one may see at the entrance of a rather imposing-looking house the words "Marie; Fashionable Milliner," inscribed on a door-plate of enamelled metal. Do not venture in, Ladies; the millinery and novelties sold within have any ornament rather than orange-blossom, and might shock your sensibilities a good deal!

This is not the only fishy establishment in the same street. Not long ago there was another of a still more doubtful character, a house on the left-hand side of the way coming from the Faubourg Montmartre, half middle-class residence half workshop, the sort of place you see in the Marais district. Under the entrance-archway, to the left, was a dark staircase leading to a mezzanine floor over the basement. To look at, nothing could well be more middle-class and respectable. After crossing the entrance-hall, you found yourself in a spacious dining-room lighted by two windows giving on the street, while two glazed doors faced them on the inner side of the apartment.

The drawing-room was similar in general arrangement. Again two windows looking into the street, and facing them, two folding-doors.

But about six o'clock every evening, there was an unexpected transformation scene. By means of moveable partitions, fixed across the middle of the apartments, the dining and drawing rooms are divided into two. These two divisions are further subdivided by the same means, so as to form two little closets. They were quite dark and on

the side opposite the entrance faced the glazed doors of the dining-room, or those of the drawing-room, as the case might be.

For furniture, there was a luxuriously comfortable sofa in each, with two or three towels hidden under the cushions, the appointments of all being precisely similar.

Mysterious openings cleverly contrived afforded a convenient view from each chamber of the interior of a vast bedroom, without the person peeping in being visible to those occupying it.

In the middle of this bedroom, was an enormous bed, raised on three steps and resembling an altar. Hung on the walls were engravings and pictures indecent enough to shock a trooper.

Why all this theatrical paraphernalia?

The whole place belonged to a certain Madame R...., a woman of the town, who surely possessed the filthiest mind ever known, but who to make up had a body of superb and sculptural perfection.

As her ordinary recognized business, she walked the streets from the corner of the Faubourg Montmartre to the Madeleine.

But she had another *clientèle* as well, composed of erotomaniacs. At stated hours these would arrive, and be received by an old lady of venerable appearance and the correctest of correct deportments, who made them welcome with marks of the deepest respect.

To reach the *penetralia* a password was required; a formula only known to the initiated.

Old lady: "What can I do for you, sir — or madame?" according to the sex of the visitor, arrangements being made for both.

Visitor (male or female): "Oh! I have come to try your animal magnetism."

Old Lady: "Very good! Pray walk in."

On this invitation being given, the applicant, whether alone or accompanied by a friend, paid down five louis (£4), the price being a fixed quantity under all circumstances. The money pouched, the visitor was shown into one of the closets — it made no difference which — just described, and locked in.

Then the mistress of the house, as soon as the four compartments were all occupied, would go out on the Boulevards and "make her bag." She never had very far to go, and in a few minutes would be back again with a young man, or an old one, in tow. Young or old made very little difference, though perhaps on the whole an elderly debauchee was better. She was not difficult to please, and cared mighty little whether the man paid well or ill. Any way it was a small part of her profits; what did pay, and pay handsomely, was the Peeping Tom confraternity.

She would lead the man she had picked up into the bedroom, and the pair stripped as naked as Adam and Eve. This done, she started running round and round the bed, hotly pursued by her companion. It was a regular cross-country gallop, and only the huntsmen and whippers-in were wanted to make it as good as a fox-hunt.

The attitudes offered by pursuer and pursued were varied and peculiar, as may be well supposed. When the former was an old man, it was specially exciting to see him tearing round, panting, stumbling — down, up again and away once more, in frenzied senile erotic eagerness! When she thought this spermatic steeple-chase, if I may venture to say so, had gone on long enough — other clients were waiting, please remember — she would allow herself to be caught..... after which the bed was there — a useful article!

At that juncture, from the closets came — not sighing and sobbing — but a veritable hurricane of bestial howls. Men who had come by themselves; Don Juans who had brought their best — or worst — girl with them, or their dog; Lesbian ladies (who always dropped in in pairs), writhed and wriggled under the stimulus of their abominable desires.

Ye dames of Lesbos, mothers, sisters and daughters of the classical tribads, no prudes are ye! But verily the things ye might then have seen accomplished in that house, before your eyes, would have made ye blush. Deeds were there done to make your wanton hearts throb once more after all the centuries with your old lascivious lustful lecherous longings!

Shameful, shameful! — but more shameful yet when a magistrate's son, then pursuing his legal studies in Paris, actually saw his own father perform the famous hunting scene in that room; and when a Princess of high and undisputed lineage, in a frenzy of hysteric passion, dashed

in the glass-door with piercing cries of "Me, me, do me! Get into me!"

On high days and holidays, when some great personage chose to treat himself to the exclusive enjoyment of the excitement of the chase, all four compartments would be let to him at a thousand francs (£40!)

But yet a lower depth of shame and horror and bestiality! The woman R... had a friend, and the two of them actually had a he-goat to love them. The scene was beyond words... Filthiness could no further go!

Nothing dies — vice least of all.

But can the magistrature specially charged with the care of public morals do nothing to restrain suchlike excesses?

Alas! very little — unless young girls under the age of consent happen to be the instruments of the abominations committed.

CHAPTER X

Same Subject Continued. — Madame Leroy. — A Squad of Life-guardsmen. — The Photographic Album. — A Profitable Business. — " Lesbians "; the " Abbaye. " — The Old Jew. — " Feathers and Artificial Flowers. " — Floors made of Looking-glass. — A Wise Precaution. — " Furnished Rooms. " — A Peep Gratis. — Ode to the Moon. — What *really* led to the Franco-Prussian War. — An Indignant Chancellor. — " Great Scott! Why, you're *men!* " — " Active " and " Passive. " — A Stiff Bill. — An Amiable Household. — A Couple of Improving Letters. — Old Schoolfellows.

Another of these clandestine temples of eroticism is in the Rue de Provence. It was formerly kept by one Jeanne Derieux, who has now retired from business to enjoy a well-earned competence. Her former servant, by no means an ill-looking girl, has tried hard to keep the connexion together, but has lacked the tact and adroitness needful for success.

In modern-built houses you see written up on a little plate of enamelled metal, " gas and water laid on every floor. " In the Rue Boudreau there is no little plate to say so, nevertheless there is no possibility of doubt about the fact. Knock at what storey you will, you find gas and

water, *and* a—sufficient supply of pretty girls. The customers are a fixed quantity, though drawn from all ranks of society.

The most famous of all these places is the one in the Rue Duphot. Till lately it was managed by a Madame Eppinger, known in the world of mercenary gallantry by the name of Leroy. It has changed hands since then.

In this establishment there are no little women. The tallest girls to be had are selected, so that seeing them all together you would suppose yourself reviewing a squad of lifeguardsmen. The invariable price is two louis — for a minimun. The house has a *clientèle* of regular customers, on whom the girls have bestowed nicknames — the Doctor, the Bey of Tunis, the Dey of Algiers, Stumpy, etc.

Speaking generally, *all* customers are decorated with the title of " Colonel " by these women — Colonel this and Colonel that and Colonel everywhere! Nothing can sound more ridiculous, especially when it is said to some old fat unhealthy-looking greybeard whose only decorations are infamous ones.

One of the *habitués* mentioned above has a queer habit. He chooses four women, gives each of them five louis, tells them to perform the Eastern " belly-dance " and makes an appointment for next day, saying, " My wife is a tiny little woman, you know; that's why I admire you so! " When to-morrow comes, he does not keep his appointment, and there the matter ends — till the next occasion, when everything will be repeated as before.

In this erotic emporium there is no special tariff for

"friends of the house." All who use it are aristocrats to the finger-tips.

Besides the regular "professionals," a number of women, kept by old men who leave their mistresses plenty of spare time on their hands, come to these places now and again to "do a bit of business." They are glad to do so, and often have their names on the books for this purpose. Actresses again from the smaller theatres are to be seen there sometimes — the class of "extra lady" who on a salary of 200 francs (£8) a month contrives to be the possessor of fifty thousand francs (£2,000) worth of diamonds.

It is a way of gaining a livelihood, like another, and will surprise nobody at all conversant with the double — and treble — lives of ladies in any great capital of Europe. If the man does not go to the woman, to the woman must, and will, go to the man. The scene is a drawing-room instead of the public street, but what odds does that make?

What will be a surprise to many is to learn that women bearing an honourable name and occupying respectable positions, women one may meet any day hanging on the arm of gentlemen of weight and consideration in the world, visit this house and others like it, to satisfy their depraved tastes — for male, *or* for female society!

We have not yet quite adopted the habits and customs of Madrid, but this is what things are coming to by degrees. The photograph album is more and more utilized, and is an increasingly popular way of arranging matters.

It is in fact highly convenient, saving women an infinity of trouble. This is the *modus operandi.*

The procuress makes a collection of the photographs of women who have applied to her from time to time. When a man turns up, whether merely to save the situation in cases of momentary embarrassment or as a regular part of the proceedings, she brings the album containing these to his notice. He makes his choice, and the woman designated is sent for. What can be simpler? Needless to add, the prices are not put opposite the portraits; it is not expedient for the customer to know the amount of the *commission* exacted by the intermediary.

The profession makes handsome profits at this pretty little game, as may be gathered from the following facts. One day, in connexion with the case of a girl supposed to be under age, a police descent was made on Madame Leroy's premises. Bills payable to order to the amount of more than 100,000 francs (£ 4,000) signed by customers, were seized on this occasion.

Here is the formal proof, under the form of a Report drawn up by the Prefect of Police who examined into the affair. It runs thus :

"By Order,

"Whereas from information by us received, it is believed that a Mons. F....., describing himself as a lawyer and as being domiciled a Paris, in the Rue....., is in possession of certain documents seized at the house of one Mons. Eppinger, alias Leroy, such as letters, cheques, etc.

"And whereas the possession of the said documents can only be

accounted for as presupposing the commission of an indictable offence; and whereas it is expedient to prevent the same being put to any use or employment prejudicial to good morals;

"In virtue of the powers conferred by the Code of Criminal Administration;

"We do hereby commission and direct Mons. Clément, Commissary of Police, to visit the house of the said F....., to the end that he may there make requisition and seizure of the aforesaid papers, which shall thereupon be conveyed to the Prefecture of Police.

"An official account shall be drawn up of this procedure, and shall be forwarded without delay to us, together with the articles seized, the whole under seal.

"Executed at Paris, the 24th day of February, 1881.

"ANDRIEUX (Prefect of Police.")

It will hardly be credited that the lawyer, Mons. F..., had already taken the preliminary steps for opening legal proceedings against the individual owing money to Madame Leroy.

In the Rue d'Amboise, a certain Mdlle. Blanche d'E... keeps one of these "houses," but of a less stylish sort. Still the prices rule fairly stiff—ten francs for "friends of the house," and twenty for outsiders.

Rue Pasquier, same *mise-en-scène* as described above in the Rue Grange Batelière, and the same speciality of "spy-holes."

In the Rue de la Lune we come across a rather unexpected form of advertisement. In a by no means ill-looking house in that street may be seen on a door giving access to one of the flats an inscription to this effect: "Florina," and underneath, "Artist"; then in one corner of

the blue enamelled plate—a white dove! How is that for a nice, appropriate trade-mark?

Rue de Prony is an establishment devoted specially to the "Lesbian" sisterhood. It is known as "The Abbey."

There is nothing whatever to distinguish the house from others in the same aristocratic district. Its frequenters come and go quietly and discreetly. Carriages setting down ladies there never draw up just at the door, and always wait "round the corner." Introductions are *de rigueur*, things being on quite a genteel, family footing.

Rue Saint Lazare, now. The proprietress is here known by the title of "The Old Jew." And she deserves it; she actually gives her "workwomen" as much as thirty sous per customer!

At one sly harem, in the Rue de la Victoire, things are a trifle quaint. The son of the house looks after the girls. Every day he sallies forth to hunt up "remounts"; then at nightfall dons a footman's livery and shows the customers upstairs.

In the busy Rue Richelieu, on the left hand of main entrance of a grand-looking house, may be seen an enamelled-iron plaque bearing the words, "Feathers and Artificial Flowers"; upstairs on a door on the third floor —same inscription with the additional direction, "Walk in, without knocking."

On opening the door, a visitor finds himself in a circular ante-room. To the right is a door with a shining brass plate, and the words, "Feathers—Special Depart-

ment," and another opposite labelled, "Workroom."

The "forewoman" is exceedingly obliging, and will provide the customer with an article of whichever class be prefers.

Not long ago the Police paid a surprise visit to one of these caverns of lubricity situated in the Rue Tilsitt, and found a little girl of fifteen on the premises, whom her father used to take to and fro, precisely as a careful mother accompanies her little ones to day-school.

The floors of the rooms in this institution—this training school we may call it—for specialists, are composed entirely of locking-glass. The object of this is, I think, obvious.

The keeper of the house is a woman of forethought and resource. A memorandum book was seized among other articles, containing the addresses of all her customers. She was questioned, and gave a characteristic reply.

"Why do you keep these compromising memoranda so carefully?"

"In the event of a 'bust-up' with the authorities, my clients, who all hold good positions, are bound to stick up for me to avoid seeing their names made public property."

One of the best known members of the profession is "The Belgian Woman," who keeps a house of assignation in the Rue Condorcet. She knows what she is about, and lets furnished rooms by the hour, or for "all night." Some of these bring her in often as much as forty francs a day!

At an address in the Rue du Faubourg Saint Denis, a venerable Countess—a real one, mind you!—Madame de X..., kept till lately a sham agency "for the purchase and negociation of pawn-tickets." She was very well known among the workgirls of the neighbourhood, who used to call her "Auntie." She was in the habit of enticing little lassies of from twelve to sixteen to her house, where she induced them to buy articles of jewellery on credit, and eventually put them in the power of senile satyrs. She was arrested, but almost immediately released again; too many would have been compromised, if the matter had been pushed home. She is settled quietly in Belgium now, where she lives at her ease. She is on the committee of the "Association of Charitable Ladies," connected with the Cathedral Church of Sainte Gudule, and takes to her new work with religious unction.

Not far from the Bourse is to be found another "house of convenience," a wonderful example of ingenious and successful organization. It happened once that the mistress of this establishment was denounced to the police, and several raids were made on her premises. Nothing further came of it, however, the affair being hushed up, and for the same reason.

This temple of joy was supplied with "raw material" by quite an original dodge. Its "purveyors" were in the habit of passing themselves off as charitable ladies connected with various philanthropic Societies. In this way they would visit systematically the poor districts of the Halles Montmartre, Belleville and Menilmontant, gaining a rep

access to families and workrooms where young women are employed. Distributing some trifling alms here and there, they would get girls to meet them at such and such a place and then take them to head-quarters. What followed can easily be guessed.

Again there are a number of so-called "Dramatic Agencies," and "Musical Agencies," which are nothing more nor less than agencies for procuration and clandestine prostitution. In this case the method of enticing young girls presents absolutely no risk. No need to send recruiters to their homes or to inveigle them on the streets; they come in of their own accord, and age makes no odds whatever, though the average ranges between twelve and twenty.

If the relatives, though this seldom happens—unless indeed it touches their pocket—protest and make complaints, "What do you mean?" is the Procuress's ready answer. "Why do you come to me? Your daughter applied to my agency for a situation. My books are in order" — as they always are. "I procured your child an opportunity of making her living; no fault of mine if she's taken to bad ways. It's no part of my business to look after her outside this room." The law is perfectly helpless under these circumstances.

Madame Denoyelle, one of the most experienced veterans of the profession, grown old in harness, draws her "pensionnaires" in summer from the Jardin de Paris; at other times from the Moulin Rouge. She is a "sweater" of the worst kind, charging her gentlemen momentary

paying guests twenty-five louis, and giving only five to the defrauded *cocotte*. The latter are perfectly aware of this; but there's no lack of petitioners for all that begging "work" in her temple of Venus. This grasping go-between is very well off, as may be supposed under these circumstances!

In the neighbourhood of a certain well-known tavern of the Rue des Martyrs may be seen any evening about eight o'clock a young girl of twelve, with the figure of a little woman. She wears, of course, short petticoats, shawing a superb pair of legs, with superbly moulded calves; her pretty dark hair is arranged in plaits tied up with a red ribbon. She walks slowly, stopping frequently before shop-windows and carefully examining the articles exposed for sale. Not unnaturally her striking appearance makes the passers-by look round and stare. As soon as one of them starts to follow her, she walks rapidly off in the direction of home. Just as she steps over the threshold of the outside door, the child turns round and the man stops. Instantly a woman he had not noticed walking behind him, taps him on the shoulder. Astonishment of the man!

"Sir! that is my daughter," she exclaims; "she's very young, but don't let that frighten you. If you'd like to come upstairs a moment to rest after your walk, which must have madc you a little out of breath?"

The man consents, and they mount to the third floor. No sooner is he seated than the child is off, under pre-

tence of taking an urgent message to a neighbour. Ten minutes, half an hour—and there are no signs of her coming back. The mother storms—" Little wretch! These kids never think of anything else but playing about the streets! A moment, sir! I'll call her in." So saying, she throws open the window and calls at the top of her voice, " Victorine! Victorine! " but entirely without effect. Then the mother turns to the " gentleman, " who is beginning to be suspicious. " Till the child comes back, would you like me to amuse you, sir? " The trick is done; the girl has gone really to pick up another bawdy fellow of the same sort, and the same little comedy will be presently re-enacted for his benefit.

The fashionable procuress follows her clients. After the Grand Prize week, the latter leaves Paris for various watering-places; so she and her " houssehold " must follow suit. Still a whole host of precautions must be observed; she sends out a private and confidential circular saying that the business will be conducted as usual, and that she has on hand a very special assortment of fine tea-roses, always fresh and constantly renewed. To prevent the possibility of mistake or unnecessary trouble on the part of her customers, her " boarders " sport a bunch of tea-roses at the waist. Accounts may be settled daily or nightly at discretion.

Orange-blossom has never so far been chosen for this purpose, but no doubt its turn will come presently.

I have plenty more of these establishments on my list, but as they present no special characteristics, I will re-

frain from particularizing them further. Nor is it necessary, as the present enumeration is in no way intended, let me say once again, as a guide-book—for which reason I do not give the numbers of streets mentioned—but is presented merely as a matter of statistics to show the reasons why the number of the licensed brothels is so comparatively small, and that of clandestine convenient public harems so large.

Again, I might have enlarged at considerable length on the "spy-hole" houses, but where was the use? I should be telling those "in the know" nothing fresh, while the uninitiated are much better left in their pristine ignorance.

Who would suppose there could be "spy-hole" amateurs ready and able to do a bit of "bilking" on occasion, seeing these gentry are aways made to pay up in advance, as you do at the play? Nevertheless some of them have found means to enjoy their pastime free, gratis, and for nothing!

Immediately opposite the Office of the Treasury Department are several hotels patronised by the cream of foreign society when in Paris, and especially by the English. Everybody has heard how fond Englishmen are of fresh water. From their most tender years they are trained to its use, and the first thing every morning they carefully wash themselves from head to foot. In summertime, having noticed that the windows over the way were always shut and that the clerks never arrived till about ten o'clock, the Anglo-Saxon visitors to the Gay City got

into the habit of leaving their windows wide open while performing their ablutions.

A clerk, who had observed this, used to time his arrival better. Having reached his office very early, he would ensconce himself behind the curtains and from that coign of vantage spy upon the adorable daughters of Albion letting down their yellow tresses, slipping off their "nighties," or the last rampart of pudicity, finally appearing like Venus rising from the Strand. So far so good; but this Peeping Tom was not satisfied yet. He could see a good deal, but not all he wanted, for the street is a wide one, and sundry details I need not further allude to were beyond his range. So he bought a ship's telescope, and set it up in a dark corner. This time nothing escaped him, down to the smallest detail, and he even caught sight of indiscreet lovers who had come to help in the minutiæ of the toilette.

At last, one fine day, he was surprised by the Deputy Chief of his Department in the act of watching a little scene generally played at night only and in the strictest privacy. He felt a hand on his shoulder, and heard his superior's voice saying wonderingly:

"What the deuce are you after there?"

"Looking at the moon, sir!"

"The moon? Well, you're doing a 'bilk' anyhow!"

And the Deputy Chief-Clerk, who was a bit of a gay dog himself, instead of reprimanding his subordinate for his inquisitiveness, hummed over softly the famous "Ode to the Moon," which runs as follows:

In one word, after a gallant resistance, the place surrendered.

The Prince offered her money, which she refused indignantly. " You must not *think* of such a thing, " she declared.

" Well then, my dear madame, you must let me make you a present. "

" Certainly not, Prince! I am amply paid as it is. "

Herr von Bismarck, having been extremely well satisfied, without the expenditure of a farthing, did not fail to come back again before long.

Same preliminary resistance as last time. The only difference was that, it being summer weather, all the lady had on was a chemise of the finest muslin, so transparent she might as well have worn nothing at all. The Iron Chancellor, to be in the fashion, stripped himself as bare as she, only keeping his boots on. Then she started to run round and round the sofa, with the Prince after her and making ineffectual grabs to lay hold of her. In vain; she slipped between his hands like an eel, till at last weary of resistance, she threw herself back on the cushions, and with sublime shamelessness, drew apart her white, massive thighs. Exposing the mysterious mark of her sex, half hidden by a dense undergrowth, she held out her superbly-moulded arms to her lover of the moment as she called to him to transfix her with the ruby-headed stiff spear which had long been threatening her. When the furious encounter was over, he again offered her a present, which she once more refused.

Some time afterwards, Prince von Bismarck found out he had simply been playing the part of a buffoon for the satisfaction of other people. In the folds of the velvet hangings were concealed tiny, almost imperceptible little peep-holes, allowing a round dozen spectators at one and the same time to enjoy the sight, and among the peepers on that occasion there were, as the great man learned to his infinite chagrin, an ambassador, two ministers in the cabinet of Napoleon III., and a distinguished General.

Bismarck was justly indignant and swore he would avenge the insult. Bitter thought— to have been seen in this guise, stark naked and in top-boots—truly an undignified get-up for the High Chancellor of the German Confederation!

He swore he would avenge himself, and he did it cruelly!

At the moment of writing, the "Courrier Français," a Parisian paper, was giving a masked ball at the Elysée Montmartre, invitations to which were in great demand. My friend and colleague, Jules Roques, the editor-proprietor, was so badgered for tickets he had to refuse admittance to *everybody*. The previous year, us; the witty song-writer, Mac Nab, and some of the chief members of the "Duffer's Club," a crowd of choice spirits, had visited the same dance in company.

On that occasion, I happened to be sitting in front of a small table facing an immense mirror. Not far from me two women were seated opposite each other at another

table, slowly and scientifically enjoying a bottle of champagne. From where I was, I could not see their faces, but I could admire at my ease the view of their magnificent shoulders reflected in the mirror.

Both were tall, and wore fine silk stockings of a maroon colour with embroidered clocks, showing off the leg to advantage, and their small feet were encased in satin slippers. Their dresses were of similar material: white satin with a small bright-coloured flower pattern. Both had trains, and the corsage, freely cut away, displayed bosoms of snow. It was a miracle that the frocks hung upon their shoulders at all, so slight was the attachment left, displaying bare arms, with a charming dimple at the elbow. Their hands were small and plump. They were extremely *décolleté* behind, so much so that a daring eye might have almost made out the first outlines of the loins. No jewellery; only a plain black velvet ribbon at the throat, contrasting well with the whiteness of the skin. Their hair was dressed in the same Marie-Antoinette mode, with three white plumes that fell gracefully over their magnificent dark tresses, of more than ebony blackness.

As it was getting on for morning, I made bold to invite them to supper at the "Abbaye de Thélème," the famous restaurant on the Place Pigalle, an invitation they made no bones about accepting at once.

It was dry, rather cold weather, and as the fresh air could not but do me good, we started on foot; nor is it any great distance from the Elysée Montmartre to the Abbaye. I took one under either arm, making myself as

the saying goes into "a basket with two handles." The beautiful creatures cuddled up close to me—so close, that I could feel the warmth of their bodies through their wraps. For myself I was freezing, and found it an interminable long way to the promised land of the Abbaye!

At last I caught sight of the man in uniform who kept the door.

We were offered a private room—the magnificent Louis XV. dining saloon. It made a splendid setting for the two grand goddesses.

I could hardly eat, so consumed was I with admiration; and I confess I found the supper tedious.

With patience, and a good deal of it, the dessert was at length reached. I told the waiter I would ring for the bill presently—and to my great joy found myself alone with my charmers.

Imitating Mons. Clément on occasion of the famous Boulangist conspiracy, I set to work on a minute and conscientious examination, though without any official paraphenalia of solemnity.

When my investigations in the mysterious under-world of my couple of laughing Cleopatras were complete, I uttered a horrid cry of indignation, fury and disappointment. I had just come across what the love-lorn Héloïse could *not* find about Abelard's person after the barbarous act of the Canon Fulbert.

"Great Heavens! You are men!" I gasped.

"Why, certainly!" they returned with a simper, tapping their finger-tips with their fans.

I would fain have doubted their word, and take it all as a poor sort of joke; but no! the proofs were too palpable.

I longed to let fly, to shout "Police! Murder!" but on second thoughts, I determined to put a good face on it, and get what "copy" I could out of the adventure.

"What name do they call you?" I enquired of one of them.

"Valentine, nicknamed 'The Duchess.'"

"And your friend?"

"Léa, 'The Marchioness.'"

"And you make this your business—attending dances to pick up sodomites?"

"Oh, no! We only came for the sake of amusement; we don't need to do it for a livelihood. We are 'kept' in every luxury, Valentine by one of the wealthiest bankers in Paris; and myself by General X..... Besides we give performances in the assignation-houses."

"How do you mean?"

"In the houses where the 'lookers-on' pay to peep through the spy-holes."

"You form your living picture with men?"

"Not necessarily. We are 'active' or 'passive' according to circumstances—what's the odds? Only if we take the active part, we dress to please the customer."

"Dress? What do you mean?

"Don't you remeber that affair in the Rue Montaigne lately? When the police raided the place, the wardrobe was found to contain complete costumes for a Bishop, an

Attorney-General, a soldier, a sailor, and so on. These were for the purpose I tell you about."

"And *I* tell *you* the whole thing is odious and abominable!"

"Tastes and colours, it's no use arguing about," the pair replied with one voice.

"Taste indeed!" I cried. "You positively leave a nasty taste in my mouth, and I'm off!"

As for colour—the waiter soon saw the colour of my money, to the tune of one hundred and fifty francs. But I do not regret the expense.

Sometimes the parents themselves begin the moral ruin of their children. The necessity of keeping up a style of living far beyond what their income justifies often throws them straight into the arms of some artful procuress, or brings them into the power of the keepers of houses of an even lower class.

Quite recently three women appeared in one of the Police Courts, charged with shop-lifting at a large drapery and novelty emporium — a mother and her two daughters!

These ladies lived in good style, gave big dinner parties and had their "At Home" day; after a dinner party, the company would play roulette. This family rented a flat at some 3000 francs (£120) a year, not far from the Madeleine, and had two "paying guests," young men of excellent family, whose board and lodging amounted to 300 francs (£12) a month each. These ladies, old and young,

were highly thought of among their neighbours, and visited very respectable families. On Sunday they never missed Church, and had a reputation for piety.

One day—alas!—they were caught red-handed, and in spite of powerful influence brought to bear in their favour, the Judges did their duty, refusing to be biassed in any way. The mother was condemned to a year's imprisonment; the daughters each to one month in gaol.

Public opinion could hardly fail to commiserate, and did so, two poor young girls thus led away by their mother's influence and exemple, over-persuaded, too, to commit a dishonest act.

Some time later, one of them met in an aristocratic drawing-room in the Faubourg Saint Germain a young and fascinating scion of an old and honoured family, and it ended by his proposing marriage to her.

After five months of married life, she made application before the civil courts for an order of judicial separation against her husband, whom she described as being dissolute and violent.

The husband would inevitably have lost his case, had he not luckily in the very nick of time lighted upon some delightful letters forming part of a correspondence not a little compromising to a young lady of society.

The first of these is apparently from an officer.

"Amélie-les-Bains, Feb. 3rd.

"Marie—my dear little woman,

"Fancy your asking me if I *want* to write to you privately! You must know that it is my greatest delight to be *private* and *alone* with you

altogether, when distances make it possible—and failing that, to be alone in your heart. I think of you again and again in these long, idle days, when I should have so much free time to devote to you, if only you were *within reach*, and would meet me, as you used, at the Fontaine Saint-Michel. Do you remember? I do. I always vividly recall that *little escapade* of ours, and *the other one too*, eh! darling? I can bring up every detail in my mind's eye as clear as if it were yesterday.

"I have not forgotten a single thing of *all we did, and all the enjoyment we had together*. But it is long ago now! Months have elapsed since *that last time*, and *we have not been happy, not really and properly happy*, for such a while! But I love it—don't you? I tell you I can never weary of your *caresses* and your *kisses* and all *our pleasant ways*. There's not *a single spot in all your whole body I've not loved*, and I give you my word *I would like to begin all over again!*

"Why can't you come just now and again to spend a few hours with me? I cannot tell you how *I hunger and thirst* after your sweet self. The fact is I have been fasting such a terrible long time that I have *a perfectly wolfish appetite*, and when I'm in bed *I feel positively ill* with longing, I assure you. And you, my pet—are you as fanciful a little woman as ever?

"Do you ever wear *the little blue petticoat* now, and *the muslin chemise*? Or do you keep all that for *high days and holidays*?

"Good-bye, dsrling - one of *my best, wet kisses to you!*"

"Maurice D....."

I cannot say whether this high-bred damsel had kept "the little blue petticoat," and "the muslin chemise," for the "high days" of her marriage; but it seems unlikely, to judge by the following letter addressed to a notorious procuress.

"Monday, 10 o'clock."

"Dearest,

"I fully intended to have been to see you yesterday, and hoped to have some good news to tell you. But alas! no such luck—nothing but defeat all along the line! I feel perfectly savage. I went there

Wednesday, though not in the morning as agreed upon ; for my usual ill-fortune pursues me and I was ill the night before.

" Later on in the day I ran over, though still far from well. He had been waiting for me all the morning and was disposed to be more than charming, the dear man. Imagine my feelings, when I was *forced* to refuse. He was not *at all* pleased. However, I was so *nice and amiable and charming* that he ended by asking me to meet him next morning at half-past nine to *have a short time together.* I arrive punctually after doing myself up *to rights*, and..... I feel furious still ! He can't receive me, and I've got to wait till the end of the week—Friday forenoon !

" And not *a blessed sou* in the house ! *Papa* in a vile temper, and nothing whatever going on, into the bargain !

" Say a prayer for me that *my good luck may come back again, like two months ago*. The only thing was, it was so soon over, and I didn't half *take advantage* of it. Still I have my hopes. He wants me to be his little wife for good and all. Only he is *so plaguey long in making up his mind*. Still, if he will only give me *something to wait on, I will not press him*, he may rest assured, and I will love him no end..... "

" Yours devotedly,

" MARIE. "

It was only after reading this edifying correspondence that the unfortunate husband called to mind how women of suspicious appearance, whom his wife used to introduce as old schoolfellows, had been for ever coming about the house.

The school they came from taught other subjects than the every day curriculum, and was kept by no less a person than the infamous Madame Leroy, professor of a science not recognized in most scholastic courses!

CHAPTER XI

"Surprise-shops." — The Magistrate and "The Old Curiosity Shop." — "I want my change!" — An Airy Costume for a Hot Day. — An Awkward Adventure.

If the houses of clandestine immorality wage an internecine war of fierce competition as against the licensed brothels, these last we shall see have a no less formidable struggle to face with the dealers in perfumery, toilet articles, books, photographs, and nicknacks, as well as with a host of pretended traders in pictures and curios.

All places of this class are known under one generic name as "surprise-shops."

What can the authorities do to abate the nuisance?

Absolutely nothing. What is the use of closing them, when the very next day fresh ones will pop up ready to open under a new name?

A little adventure which happened the other day to one

of our best known magistrates will show the *modus operandi*.

The judicial magnate in question is an enthusiastic collector of curiosities and works of art. Oriental *bric-à-brac*, tapestry, ancient weapons and bronzes are his specialities, and he possesses a perfectly marvellous assortment of all these.

He is for ever stopping to gaze into the windows of second-hand shops, and knows by heart every treasure exposed for sale from the Palais de Justice to the remotest corner of the exterior Boulevards.

One day on his walk home from the law-courts, he altered his usual route and went by the Chaussée d'Antin for a change. In front of No. —, his eye caught some very attractive pieces of tapestry ticketed at extremely moderate prices.

Coming nearer, he discovered in the window among other articles a cup of hammered bronze, the very original shape of which fascinated him the instant he clapped eyes on it.

He went in, and was received by two very pretty women who came forward at once with an engaging air of wishing to oblige in any way.

His thoughts fixed on his contemplated purchase, he paid scant attention to the saleswomen.

"How much is that bronze cup in the window?"

"Ten francs!"

It was a more nothing. The worthy magistrate drew a hundred-franc (£4) note from his pocket, and handed it to one of the women.

"Will you please step this way, sir—for your change," she then said.

Following the shop-woman, he soon found himself in a pretty boudoir, with mirrors all round the walls and a thick, soft carpet on the floor. A sofa and some cushioned settees completed the furniture.

Much suprised, he awaited developments.

The woman threw her arms round his neck, and clasped him in a warm, perfumed embrace, covering his face with delirious kisses. I must omit the details of the scene that followed and only chronicle the concluding conversation.

At length, "I tell you I want my change, and I want my bronze cup, and I don't want anything else," said he, in a tone admitting of no further parley.

The two sirens instantly adapted themselves to circumstances on finding they had mistaken their man, giving the amateur his change and his coveted curio.

He took no action and the house was not closed.

In former days, the passages of the Opera and other like arcades and covered footways were exclusively affected by shops for the sale of gloves and perfumery.

The powers that be stepped in, however, and shut them up compulsorily, threatening to prosecute the owners under an old police bye-law.

A well-known shop for the sale of perfumery—and other more or less sweet-smelling things—existed formerly in the Passage de l'Opéra, and it was kept by a Mdlle. O...., a dazzling demirep. The police raided the

premises one fine afternoon and in the back shop discovered a young woman in the act of helping a big schoolboy to try on a pair of gloves. For this operation, she had chosen a decidedly free and easy costume—for she was stark naked. The nude goddess was taken into custody. Imagine the astonishment of the examining judge when she informed him she was a married woman, with four children, and niece of a high official in one of the government offices.

"But why," queried the magistrate, "were you so lightly clad?"

"Because it was such a hot day!" was her unblushing reply.

At the very same address, in 1885, a society lady met with a very annoying adventure.

A woman ot easy virtue, named P....., owned the shop at that date; but as she had been in ill health for some considerable time, she had entrusted the business to a friend of hers of the same kidney—a pretty blonde. For all that, she enjoyed coming at frequent intervals to revisit the scene of her former triumphs.

For some time, the police authorities had had an eye on the place, and one evening three detectives were on watch in the immediate neighbourhood, when they saw Mdlle. P..... arrive in company with a fashionably-dressed and attractive-looking young lady—who, however, as a matter of fact, was in absolute ignorance of the ill-repute of the establishment.

The detectives at once concluded the visitors were "gay" women, being further confirmed in their suspicions by the fact of two gentlemen having entered previously. While one officer went off to warn the Commissary of Police of the district, the other two left behind kept the door against the women's escape.

Before the Commissary, the whole truth came out. Mdlle P.....'s friend was released, while she herself, as mistress of the house, was sent to jail to await her trial.

Some three hundred shops of this sort may be counted in Paris. The women who run them seldom "work" themselves; nor is the reason far to seek. Customers are for ever asking for "something new," and something new they must have—or the business goes to the dogs. Not that there is any difficulty in keeping up the supply; there are a hundred applicants for every vacancy, and the "trying-on room" is never short of hands.

THE END OF VOL. I.

LA ROCHELLE, IMPRIMERIE NOUVELLE NOEL TEXIER

WOMEN THAT PASS IN THE NIGHT

SECOND PART

(Vol. II.)

Women that Pass in the Night

REMINISCENCES

OF THE

PARISIAN QUEENS

OF

PROSTITUTION

SECOND AND LAST VOLUME

PARIS
CHARLES CARRINGTON
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1906

Adapted from the French.

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OF THE

SECOND VOLUME

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WOMEN THAT PASS IN THE NIGHT

PART THE SECOND

Some Famous Demi-mondaines.

CHAPTER I

A Virgin *à la mode*. — A Prince Afraid of Draughts. — " I can smell the sea from here ! " — Khalil-Pasha. — An Elixir of Youth. — An Extra Dose. — A Pasha of Three Tails. — " Ink-pot Fleas. " — How to " Return " a Dinner ; or. the Refractory Vegetables. — History of Four Noble Damosels of the Court of Napoleon III. — " You can never tell what the man's thinking. " — " Begone, dull care ! " — Too Plain. — " Not too much overdone, please ! "

All Paris will know who I mean, so I need not give the lady's name.

She was originally a brunette, and a downright fine woman.

When she first appeared on the stage at the Variétés, she made quite a sensation ; and it did not need a telescope to see she was going to rise to the tip-top of the tree. She wore her hair in plain bands, as the Virgin is re-

presented in pictures. Her heavy blue-black locks and long eyelashes that veiled the splendour of her magnificent eyes gave her whole countenance an aspect of ineffable candour and innocence.

She *looked* the image of maiden modesty — she *was* a new priestess of love and a most ardent one.

From the Variétés Theatre she passed over to the Odéon. She appeared for a while at the Gymnase, then went on tour in America.

Since her return to this side of the Atlantic, she has given up the stage, or else the stage has given her up. She has becoms an authoress, if you please!

A distinctive mark that may further aid in identification. Ill-natured and indiscreet persons who share her favours declare that at the psychological moment she is in the habit of testifying her satisfaction by a sort of music that was the glory of Armand Silvestre.

One night a Prince, the Prince of G....., had claimed her hospitality, which had nothing of Scotch frugality about it, you may be sure — nor yet of Scotch generosity. All the time she kept on saying again and again, "Are you satisfied, Prince? Are you satisfied?"

"No, I'm not!" the Prince blurted out at last, "and I'm off. I shall catch a bad cold else."

"What do you mean?"

"That rattling of castanets gets on my nerves horribly, for I'm not used to it. You should really, my dear, confine yourself to Spaniards — or make up your mind to live on the sands!"

" I really don't understand you."

" No wish to hurt your feelings, but one can positively smell the sea from here, you know! "

However, the day was to come when with all her gifts of passion and ardour she was to meet her master.

The circumstances were as follows.

Khalil-Pasha desired to add the fair lady's name and virginal renown to his list of conquests, already a long one without counting his harem triumphs.

Neither ambassadors, diplomatic palavers, nor protocols were required in the affair. A plain offer, supported by reasons " of weight, " began and ended the negociations.

The lady was eager and ready to pocket the high fee promised, but somehow the Pasha, in spite of the broad hints he received, kept on continually putting off till to-morrow the execution of his project.

At last came a crisis when he must stand to his guns, or be set down as a rival of the famous Abelard.

Khalil-Pasha had made the acquaintance on the Longchamps racecourse of the famous Doctor Thévenet, and the latter, a society man and a gay dog, had been appointed his body-physician. The Pasha now wrote to his medico to come to see him " on urgent business, " and on Thévenet's arrival accosted him to this effect :

" I have an assignation, doctor, for to-night with Mdlle. X..... "

" The deuce you have! But that's serious! " was Thévenet's rejoinder." She's the devil and all—she is ! "

" I know she is, and that's where the trouble comes in

— more especially as I'm getting along for forty, after keeping a harem of fifty favourites going since I was twenty-five! Between friends, I am ready to allow that — er — I'm a trifle — ahem! — tired, you know — a bit shaken even, if you must have it. I want you to give me something to make me — er — er — well! — a few years younger! "

" Never fear! " exclaimed Thévenet confidently. " I'll get you a little prescription made up, and send it along. Ask the lady to dinner, then at dessert slip out on some excuse and drink a small liqueur-glass full of the contents. A couple of hours later, we'll see what we *shall* see! "

The same evening, that big private room, the celebrated No. 16, at the Café Anglais, was all ablaze with lights. Khalil-Pasha was dining there with some choice spirits.

At dessert, according to the arrangement, he withdrew for a moment and uncorked his phial of rejuvenescence.

Suddenly a happy thought struck him : " I told the doctor I was a trifle tired, a bit overwrought even. I told him a lie. I am more than shaken a trifle — I'm ' played out! ' None of your liqueur-glasses for me; I'll drink a full tumbler of the stuff. "

He gulped it down, and rejoined the company, who, gentlemen and ladies alike, were rapidly growing more and more rampageous. After an hour of this uproarious gaiety and at the sight of the wealth of opulent shoulders and three-quarter-bared bosom displayed before his eyes with all the mute persuasiveness of naked female flesh, Khalil began to feel himself in great form — excellent form, quite

extraordinary good form. In his turn, he grew urgent, so much so that he abruptly left his guests, taking the beautiful brunette along with him.

In the carriage, she had all the trouble in the world to make him remember his rank and dignity, so as to prevent his behaving like those homeless amateurs of the weaker sex who take a cab to shelter their fugitive amours.

At long last, at two in the morning, they were fairly in bed. Great Scott! what a night of lurid lasciviousness it was — never ending!

Next morning, towards ten o'clock, the maid entered on tip-toe, bringing the traditional cup of perfumed chocolate. She found her mistress lying, half dead and groaning, full length on the carpet in a state of almost complete nudity.

The sight of the maid revived Khalil's passion. He sprang out of bed and rushed at her to seize the chocolate from her hands and show her how he had vanquished her mistress during long hours passed in Cupid's arena. At the sight of the weapon with which this gallant Oriental potentate had entered the lists of love, the soubrette sets up a piercing scream, which brings the man-servant on the scene. But seeing the state of the Pasha as he triumphantly waved his sceptre, the varlet fled in abject terror, recalling the legendary habits of turbaned Turks.

Thévenet was summoned in all haste, and soon had his patient in a tepid bath and afterwards administered very vigorous medical treatment, including strong doses of bromide of potassium and camphor. In the course of a few

hours the patient came back to his normal condition of a Pasha " a bit shaken " in condition, though he felt the effects of what had taken place for the rest of his natural life. As for the lady, it took a month and more before she quite got over the shock she had endured.

In telling the story to her comrades, she always ended by saying emphatcially :

" I'm quite aware Khalil is one of the highest dignitaries of his native land — a big man — a pasha of three tails. But if you were to give me a hundred thousand francs, I wouldn't pass such another night!! "

A funny adventure happened to her one day. She was by way of holding a house-warming, and was anxious to invite some of those young men of letters (if they are worthy of the name) who are willing to pay for their dinner by a few lines of compliment which they slip in surreptitiously among the jokes and indecencies of the little smart journals devoted to the chronicles of the half-world in the Gay City. The lights of love get a gratis advertisement and a little cheap notoriety by these means. But she found herself dragged in different directions by two opposite promptings—those of love of approbation on the one hand and avarice on the other. In this strait she hit upon an ingenious middle course.

She invited two or three of her lady friends, good-natured girls with plenty of small talk, and two of the tribe of scribbling young chaps, or " inkpot fleas, " as an eminent literary craftsman used to call them. The whole

menu consisted of only soup, jugged hare and salad. In the very middle of this sumptuous banquet, a loud ring at the bell was heard. The door opened, and there stood Hector de Callias, a celebrated pressman. His first words were:

"I'm as hungry as a hunter!"

"But there's absolutely nothing left!" declared the mistress of the house.

"Oh! well, give the man something or the other to eat anyhow!" put in one of the ladies.

With a very ill grace the fair and dyed hostess had his wants supplied; whereupon he fell to and ate and drank copiously. As she had "a friend" to receive about eight o'clock, she begged her guests to take a turn till ten, at which hour supper would be served.

The young lady who had stood up for the hungry Callias, feeling annoyed, took the poor fellow's arm on leaving the house and offered to take him to "The Nimble Rabbit," the sign of a tavern kept by one Saltz. The place in question is now known as "The Murderess," and is run by a fascinating charmer, Adèle. There the journalist's female champion ordered a very tasty dinner, with red herrings and a salad of cold haricot beans. Callias ate like an ogre and drank to correspond, till when it was getting on for half-past nine he was royally drunk.

They chartered a conveyance, and as the clock struck ten were back at Mdlle. X.....'s.

Hector sat down on a couch; and presumably the haricot beans did not agree with the tavern wine, for no sooner was he installed than he was as sick as a dog over the car-

pet; splashing furniture, curtains and hangings all about.

" You rotten pig! " screamed Mdlle. X....., in a passion of anger and disgust. " Couldn't you go somewhere else to work off your booze, you drunken, foul beast, you! "

" Why — what's the trouble? " hiccupped Callias, with a ludicrous attempt at dignity. " You gave us a dinner, and I wasn't going to wait a week to return it — with haricot beans into the bargain! "

So saying he made his exit, while the " friends of the house " squirmed with laughter, and the servant mopped up the famous haricot beans.

Returning to the stage, she was engaged by an enterprising impresario for a grand starring tour in America. Her friends were sympathising with her:

" Poor woman! " said one, " she will be sea-sick. "

" Or die of yellow fever, " added another.

" Don't you believe it, my dears! " put in the sharp-tongued C.... " You bet she's never had such a treat as this is going to be in all her natural; she's going to carry on at fifteen knots an hour! " (1)

What follows might be entitled the " History of Four Noble Damosels of the Court of Napoleon III. " It proves plainly that all strumpets are not mere pretenders to high birth and noble blood.

The date is about 1864, just when the Second Empire

(1) This is a pun, as obscene as it is difficult to translate. The French word for " knot " is *nœud*. In Gallic slang, it also stands for *penis*.

was at its zenith, and life was marked by an unbroken series of festivities.

We hear enough and to spare about "Imperial Corruption." To judge by the scandals that fill the newspapers day after day, democratic morals are not much better. It has always been the same, "corruption" is not a matter of this or that government, it arises from an infinity of different causes having nothing whatever to do with politics good, bad, or indifferent. Undoubtedly in the time of the Empire, some very great ladies, to use the phrase then in fashion, "were no better than they should be."

Of all garrison towns in France—of all county towns—Versailles was the most sought after.

In three quarters of an hour, riding or driving; or in thirty minutes by express train, you were there.

And then what a choice of—ahem!—flirts! Two regiments of Carbineers, the Artillery of the Guard, several battalions of Zouaves, a company or two of Light Infantry, the troops on guard, two Lancer regiments, commanded by young, rich officers—it was enough to make any girl's—what shall I say?—*mouth* water.

The Zouaves were less of a success than the others, if history tells true. Napoleon III. being desirous of changing the pattern of nether-garments worn by several of his regiments, had the new model tried on by one of the handsomest men from each division. On the appointed day, he passed them all in review under his own eyes to judge of the effect, being accompanied by several ladies of the Court.

Drawn up in a row were a "Chasseur," a "Guide," a Light-Infantryman, a Grenadier, an Artilleryman, a Lancer, and last of all, a Zouave.

The Emperor, as he passed along the line, asked the ladies' opinion of each individually.

Coming to the Zouave: "And what do you think of these wide breeches?" he said to the Princess de R.....; "the soldier will be comfortable in *them*, I think."

"Bah! Noble hearts beat beneath their red trousers—but with breeches like that," she replied, making a grimace of disgust, "you can never tell what the man's thinking!"

At Versailles, Society rode hard and danced hard, and lived hard. The ladies of Versailles, who were by no means like the city of Lille, deemed impregnable, were exposed to frequent attacks.

Four of them in particular were famous for going the pace.

The first was the daughter of a nobleman, in command of a regiment. The second, niece of a General Officer. The third, danghter of another General. The fourth and last, daughter of a distinguished painter then all the fashion.

These young ladies were mobbed; from the subaltern to the Colonels in command, the whole army was at their tiny feet. To make a long story short, one fatal evening what was bound to happen sooner or later did really happen.

A grand gala entertainment was being held at the Pre-

fecture of Versailles. The Comte de Saint Marceau, assisted by his charming daughters and his secretary, Comte Allez-d'Arros, was doing the honours.

The four beauties were all there. Long ago their heart had made its choice—to use the consecrated phrase in such cases.

At supper, before the *cotillon*, they were seen sitting each by the side of her own happy swain.

Supper ended, the couples were marshalled for the *cotillon*, and names were called out: Maria, Léa, Suzanne, Henriette.

But echo only answered.

A fresh summons, but nothing came of it. Not a trace was to be found of the fair defaulting quadrille.

Immediately after supper, they slipped away surreptitiously, crossed the great Square and entered the Hôtel de la Chasse. There they changed their ball-dresses for walking costumes, which curiously enough, instead of being quietly at home, happened to be at the Hôtel. They drank off a hurried bumper of champagne, to give them a little Dutch courage, and away with all speed!

Henriette and Suzanne got into a landau which was in waiting, and off, whip and spur, for Rambouillet! Maria spent the same night in a common-place bedroom at the Hôtel de la Chasse, and next day took up her abode in an elegant little establishment her lover had furnished in town.

As for Léa, who was also to have been one in the little escapade, she was forced to give it up, for that evening

of all others she was to dance the *cotillon* wtth her father, who kept her to time.

Later on, she had her revenge.

The day after this threefold elopement, there was a fine crop of scandal, as may be supposed, at Versailles,

At the different officers' messes, on the public promenades, in the Avenues, in the Parks, everywhere and all day long, conversation took some such form as this:

"Haven't you heard?"

"No! What?"

"Maria, Suzanne, Henriette—you know?"

"Well—what then?"

"Gone, disappeared, eloped — the whole three of them!"

Then would follow the most varied exclamations of astonishment and incredulity.

"Absurd! Impossible! Incredible! A pack of lies!"

For a whole month the thing was talked about and debated, but as last even the most unbelieving had to credit the evidence.

Maria lived five years in conjugal bliss with her lover, who eventually died of a wound received in a duel. She had two children by him.

She became a millionairess by the death of one of her aunts, the Marquise de C.... Her fortune tempted a Polish Count, the Count de K.....ki, who was willing to father her two children.

Like the prophet Habbakuk, Polish Counts are "capable of anything."

Suzanne went on the stage at the Variétés. She had the finest leg in Paris, which of course ensured her a great and immediate success. This led to an engagement at the Châtelet Theatre, where she was the understudy of Madame Mariani, a sculptural goddess of the stage, whose speciality was parts with little costume and still less lines to recite. Suzanne delighted the eyes of all spectators, and it was said of her that when she burst upon the scene under the ray of the limelight, the first three rows of the stalls resembled a field of asparagus.

If she were asked how a woman of her birth and lineage had come to this mixture of prostitution and *poses plastiques*, she always answered:

"'Pon my word, I don't know. I didn't care one bit for the fellow who first 'had' me. It was all the fault of Henriette—that I swear! She dragged me into it. Anyhow I've given up my family motto now, and taken the merry device, 'Begone dull care!' After me the deluge!"

Maria remained a whole fortnight with her lover. She left him to take up with a long-haired poet just imported, and within a month after her elopement was enjoying the luxurious emoluments of the Théâtre des Variétés.

The poet in question, who has since made his way in the world riding a more ordinary sort of steed than Pegasus, is know in the circle of accommodating Paris Venuses by the name of "The Old Maid with the Golden Locks."

Like Mary Magdalen, Maria repented, finally en-

tering a convent. Her "gay" life lasted altogether eight months.

As for Henriette, who was perfectly charming and exceedingly sought after, she was asked in marriage by some of the most prominent men under the Second Empire.

She refused Aristarchi Bey, because he was a Greek, she said; Eugène Pereire, the big banker, who was crazy to possess her, because he was plain and had been baptised—Jewish fashion—with a pruning-knife. And so with all her suitors; she refused them one after the other on various pretexts, each more laughable than the other.

At last, when nearly twenty-eight, she made up her mind to marry a Baron—a real one—who was a Captain of Gendarmerie attached to the Imperial Hunt, the Baron de V.... After his death, she made her *début*, but without other success than a pretty woman can always command, at the Folies Dramatiques Theatre under the transparent pseudonym of Mdlle. de Prelly.

She earned a great reputation as a Lesbian; and died of her indulgence in these sexless pleasures.

It was to her that a great actress, since come down to be a singer at a *café-concert*, seeing her one evening "making a Dutch oven" before the fire in the green-room at the theatre, made a remark which is not likely to be forgotten:

"If it's for me, little woman, you know—not too much done! I like my mutton with the gravy!"

CHAPTER II

Adèle Courtois, the " Dutch Beauty. " — An Open-handed Baron. — A Bohemian Villa. — " Queer Street " and Queer Doings. — Caroline Letessier. — A Bag o' Bones. — The " Sentimental Shrimp." — A Quarter of a Million Thrown into the Rhine. — Mistake the Eiffel Tower for a Stick of Barley-sugar. — Query, an Omnibus or a Chemist's Shop ? — A Greedy Fellow ; Two Lobsters for one Préfet. — Thirty-five Years off his Age ! — " Wife of all Men and Husband of all Women. " — In the Rue Rossini. — Colbrun the Comedian. — Caught in a Bath. — A Monomaniac. — His Little Perquisite. — Anna Deslions. — An Expensive Key. — A Golden Stair. — " Let us Swear on the Public Place. "

Adèle Courtois, known as the " Dutch Beauty, " a Flemish woman by birth, and no doubt a descendant of the conquering race at the time of the Spanish occupation of the Netherlands. No female ever had blacker hair or a countenance of a more perfect Southern *morbidezza* and a more brilliantly white complexion.

Her age ? Lost in the far-off mists of antiquity. Contemporaries who might have given information, all dead and gone long ago. About 1860, she had a son who was then a Captain in the Belgian Army. After Madame de

Païva, Adèle was the most wealthy of all the Parisian *cocottes*. Her fortune amounted to some four millions of francs (£160,000), which she had had the prudence to invest in gilt-edged securities.

And this was not all.

A certain Baron made her an allowance of six thousand francs (£240), besides giving her twenty-five thousand francs (£1,000), on his birthday, and the same sum on her own—not a bad little present!

And this was not all.

He always gave her fifty thousand francs (£2,000), on New Year's Day. With all this she was well able to keep up a princely establishment—and she certainly did not fail to use her opportunities!

In addition to her flat in the Rue Saint Georges, Adèle possessed, not far from Malmaison, one of the prettiest villas anywhere near Paris. There every summer was established a sort of permanent Bohemian settlement. Amongst standing guests were Peduzzi, a fine, fat wench; Caroline Hassé; Caroline Letessier; Lucile Mangin; Barucci; Soubise; and Anna Deslions. These were all the pick of the "toppers" among the "kept" women of the Gay City, and there assembled friends of the house, lady-friends, and friends' friends. There was singing and dancing galore, and as the ballad hath it, "love-making by day and eke by night."

Each Thursday evening the merry company took wing, and Friday morning the Baron would arrive in state.

The footmen were all in full dress to receive him,

while two dignified *maîtres d'hôtel* waited at table. He used to breakfast with Madame, then leave always at four in the afternoon to the minute. At six the fun used to begin again, to go on unabated till the following Friday.

Adèle, and she was perfectly aware of the fact, was only the Baron's "stalking-horse" and pretext. All he really cared for was young lads with blue and pink cravats whom he picked up in the Passage Jouffroy or the Galerie d'Orléans, in the Palais Royal. Such was his only passion.

To gratify it, he used to take his young friends of the moment to a small set of luxuriously-furnished rooms he had in the Rue Geoffroy Marie. Once there—let me draw a veil—the infamous Marquis de Sade's morbid brain could only have imagined and described such orgies as went on.

Caroline Letessier was a small thin woman—so thin that like Sara Bernhardt in her young days, she might have slept in a gun-barrel. Caro was thinner than thin, as the fairy books say, a perfect "bag o' bones."

She was blonde, with a big nose, and capacious palpitating nostrils, which, by the way, she had a habit of nervously picking. Her eyes were pretty—blue, deep, and dreamy-looking, beneath heavy lids. She appeared to be consumptive to the marrow of her bones, but it was only her look. A characteristic trait—she never, on rainy days, drew up her petticoats since one occasion when a wag on the Boulevards had shouted out as she passed, "'Ere—hi! Look at the lady drying her stockings on the tongs!"

She seemed always in a chronic half faint, and gazed at you as if she was going to swoon right off at sight.

Her bosom friend, Caroline Hassé, had in a moment of expansion nicknamed her the "Sentimental Shrimp." To complete the picture, she was short-sighted enough to mistake the Eiffel Tower for a stick of barley-sugar.

She was into the bargain about as bad in disposition and temper as a wicked harlot could possibly be built.

She was a perfect Danaides's sieve, insatiable as fate. Prince Narischkine, of Russia, gave her a grand house and four millions of francs (£160,000) in less than three years.

Lord "Carlo" Hamilton left in her hands three quarters of his patrimony. One day the pair were on their way to Baden-Baden together. Caroline happened, in searching for some article, to open her jewel-case, and Hamilton caught sight of a "parure" of diamonds which was unfamiliar to him. At the moment they were crossing the bridge betwen Strasburg and Kehl. The Englishman without another word laid hold of the jewel-case and pitched the whole thing into the Rhine. Fortunately, the coffer contained only her travelling jewels—a matter of barely two hundred and fifty thousand francs (£10,000); if the complete outfit had been inside, the loss would have topped a million francs (£40,000).

Caroline's extreme short-sightedness proved very nearly fatal to a certain ex-Prefect, famous for his love of ceremonial show.

One evening they were returning together after the dinner at the Moulin Rouge—not the variety palace and

dancing hall of our day, but a rustic restaurant (now built over) in the Avenue d'Antin, just off the Rond Point des Champs Elysées—making for the Faubourg Saint Honoré on foot that the fresh air might dissipate the fumes of the champagne. Suddenly she pushed her companion under the wheels of a cab, thinking an omnibus was going to run over them.

As a matter of fact, the supposed omnibus was nothing whatever but a chemist's shop illuminated with two great globes full of red liquid!

The gentleman we speak of had preserved up to his sixtieth year every mark of the perfect man of the world, young, elegant and up-to-date. He it was who, being absent from Paris in the performance of his duties, used to write to Madame Planaize, the well-known procuress, in these terms:

"Having a friend coming to breakfast with me to-morrow, I shall be glad if you will send me a couple of lobsters—only fresher than last time."

He it was again who made such a telling retort for a man of his age to a great lady, the Comtesse de Pourtalès.

"You too, sir—a grandfather?" the Countess said to him on one occasion.

"Madame," he replied, "I am sixty, according to my certificate of birth; I look forty-five by daylight. By the glimmer of a bedroom candle, I am really not more than thirty; and when between the sheets, and the light out, by Jove, I'm not a bit over twenty—and I'll prove it to you any night you like!"

History is mute as to whether the lady was the same or not.

Blanche d'Antigny was another tall, buxom, perfect magnificent blonde, with a rich bust and buttocks. Her legs were the worst things about her, but her mouth was ripe, luscious, and fruity—two thick moist red pulpy lips, and grand white large teeth. She was "wife of all men and husband of all women." In this she resembled Julius Cæsar, and like him she "came," saw, and conquered!

Day or night, rain or shine, she was always ready. Besides her official residence, she possessed a *buen-retiro* in the Rue Rossini, opposite the Baron Alphonse de Rothschild's stables. Her secret retreat consisted of a kitchen, a dining-room and a bed-room, hung in light blue velvet relieved by arabesques of a tender pink.

Her official apartments served, so to speak, as her office for the transaction of business, while these other rooms were devoted to the relaxation of mind—not to mention body!

Marguerite Rigolboche, Marie Pellegrin, Prelly, Armandine, ladies of the footlights and ladies of the pavement, used to make constant assignations with each other there, and after lunch, in the severely simple costume of our mother Eve—before the fall—would indulge in high jinks of a very tender description for their own private diversion. N.B. No spy-holes allowed!

One night, Blanche was seized with a sudden and unaccountable caprice to sleep with an actor, Colbrun. The

latter used to play comic parts at the Châtelet Theatre. He was short, ugly, and scrofulous—in one word, a disgusting object. Such a fancy can only be explained on the hypothesis of an innate love of of filth.

Instead of taking him to the Rue Rossini, she introduced him to her official residence. Feeling some doubts as to Colbrun's personal cleanliness, she had a bath got ready, and presently they both plunged into it. They had hardly been there, however, five minutes when suddenly a peremptory ring sounded at the outer door. Next instant appeared the Prince D..... H....., master of the house and paymaster in chief!

"What are you after there?" he cried in a passion.

"Oh! I swear, dear boy, once isn't always! It's only just for a change!"

The Prince sized hold of Colbrun and pitched him out stark naked on to the landing. Then before Blanche had time to slip on so much as a chemise, he administered a thrashing—and a sound one, too. She kept the marks of it for six weeks after. Her body was literally black and blue all over.

This misadventure made her more careful for the future, but did not in any way interrupt the little games in the Rue Rossini.

Blanche was a good sort and anything but a prude; she used to enjoy telling this curious story of her younger days.

"The first time I ever had ten louis (£8) from a man was under the following circumstances. I had only been settled quite a short time in Paris when I noticed on

several occasions that I was followed by a gentleman who appeared to me to be very much the right sort.

"At length one evening he accosted me near the Place de la Madeleine, persuaded me to get into his carriage, and drove me to a house in the Faubourg Saint Honoré. No sooner were we within the door than he slipped away without a word. At the same moment an imposing servant-man came on the scene, who showed me to a sumptuously furnished bed-room, in the middle of which, on a magnificent Smyrna rug, stood a bier!

"The man then informed me that his master was a monomaniac, but quite harmless. He added, 'Don't be the least afraid; he's the most charming of men, and nothing unpleasant will happen.'

"He requested me to undress perfectly naked and lie down on the bier, which—I forgot to say so before—was upholstered in black satin.

"I did not see how to get out of it, and was proceeding to unfasten my dress, when a thought crossed my mind.

"'Leave the room,' I said to the servant, 'it's no part of the programme, I imagine, my stripping naked before you'?

"He only replied with a cynical smile, 'Oh! that you know, is my little perquisite on the transaction!'

"I undressed rapidly, and laid myself down on the bier, when the servant at once quitted the room. Scarcely had the door closed behind him when his master came in, and gazed at me for some moments. Then almost instantly the man re-entered by another door, came up to me and fired a pistol at my head.

"The monomaniac fell down flop on the carpet, and lay an inert mass, uttering blood-curdling screams. The valet carried him into a neighbouring room, and leaving him there, returned at once to help me put my things on again.

"The whole set of incidents had passed like a flash of lightning.

"Before I was able to realise what had happened, I was on the pavement outside holding a small pocket-book in my hand. Opening it, I found ten louis inside, together with a letter in these words:

"'If you have not been too much frightened, you will please come back this day week at the same hour, and so on week by week. Payment will be at the same rate as before.'

"'Marquis de G.....'"

"To tell you the truth I was half dead with terror, and never went back again at all."

Very natural—but still I know a goodish few who would be glad at the same price to have a pistol fired at their heads every day, or even something more than that, submitting obediently to any discharge from any weapon, in any way.

Many traits in the life of buxom Blanche served the great novelist Emile Zola when he portrayed his progress of a Paris harlot, "Nana." It is easy now to see how he made use of the Colbrun episode in that great work. Blanche d'Antigny died, poor, deserted and alone, having contracted smallpox in Egypt, whither she had gone to fulfil an engagement at the Khedivial theatre. The death of Zola's heroine is carefully copied from that real tragic ending of a courtesan's career.

Another bright star in the constellation of Paris *cocottes* was lovely Anna Deslions. For a whole month, Prince Paul Demidoff had been in deadly earnest, a very rare event with that gay nobleman. The fact is he was in fierce pursuit of this fair lady, who was equally determined in her resistance. This was a quite abnormal phenomenon, as she was far from being of stern moral fibre. The more pressing the Prince became, the more scornful was her attitude towards him, and she treated him more as if he had been a shop-boy at the big drapery store of the Louvre than what he was—a high-born and wealthy nobleman. He was furious and at his wits' end, for he had used up every device—riding-parties, banquets, promises and presents. All were futile alike. Anna Deslions remained as cold as an Alpine glacier.

Nevertheless a day came at last when she capitulated, doubtless in virtue of the axiom we owe to a celebrated General: "A fortress invested is soon taken." She waved the white flag, but obtained all the honours of war.

That night a fashionable *demi-mondaine* was giving a monster supper to celebrate her birthday in her pretty rooms of the Rue Royale. The *crême de la crême* of fast society was invited, first and foremost being the Prince and Anna.

The supper of course was dazzlingly magnificent. At table the Prince was seated by Anna's side, and was more pressing than ever. The champagne no doubt seconding his tender advances, Anna thawed at last and said to the delighted Prince:

"You want..... my key? Well, I agree, but on one condition — a fancy of mine."

"Name it."

"I should like to see you climb my staircase treading on a golden carpet."

The Prince pondered a moment, then replied:

"So be it, my dear, your wish shall be attended to."

Everybody in the swim of fast life at the time in Paris is acquainted with the delightful little nest Anna Deslions then occupied. It was in the Rue Taitbout, from which a private staircase led to her apartments.

The day after this momentous supper-party, it was arranged that Anna Deslions should drive to the Bois earlier than usual, about two o'clock instead of five, so as to give the Prince the necessary time for carrying out the agreement.

Scarcely was she outside the door when Prince Demidoff arrived on the scene, in the wake of four of his men-servants, each bending double under the weight of an enormous sack. Every one of these gigantic canvas bags was full of golden louis.

With these they now proceeded to cover the whole of the stair-carpet, arranging the glittering coins carefully edge to edge.

When the job was done, the forty-two steps were each studded with a mosaic of five hundred louis, making in all a respectable total of four hundred and twenty thousand francs (£16,800).

A golden key few hearts perhaps could have resisted.

Be this as it may, the Prince was not sorry, for all his

vast fortune, that Anna Deslions, like her neighbour and friend, Mdlle. Soubise, did not live on the fourth floor.

A gold mine in the Urals is not without its advantages after all.

Anna's tender complaisance was inexhaustible towards "all sorts and conditions of men." On one occasion she gave a *rendez-vous* to one of our most famous men of letters for the evening of the same day, and another for next night to a celebrated novelist—both are dead now, and one has his statue, while the other will also be set up in marble before long. They were friends, and happening to meet, supped together. Towards one o'clock in the morning, they started, both of them tolerably tipsy, for the lady's abode. The maid who was sitting up, readily admitted them, though she had only really expected one visitor, presumably on the principle—if there's enough for one, there's always enough for two. The mistress of the house on her side had supped freely in company with a young collegian, and was fast asleep. The two authors got into bed without waking her—one on one side of her soft warm frame, one on the other, and she in the middle. Next morning, the fumes of the past night now partially dissipated, before daybreak, the two men's hands came in contact.

"Halloa! Is that you? What are you doing here?"

"If it comes to that, what are you!"

"Great heavens! *I* don't know!

"I thought I was alone anyhow."

"So did I."

"The hussey is fooling us. Will you swear an oath?"

"Certainly—delighted!"

The lady was still calmly slumbering. The men lifted the bedclothes, placed their joined hands on the sleeping beauty's soft centre of sex, and said in unison:

"Let us swear an oath on the public place —"

Before they get any farther with their strange coverlet covenant, sweet Anna awoke. The couple of cronies dressed and solemnly went on their way.

Between two fools she fell to the ground. Delightful, lascivious Deslions never forgave them.

CHAPTER III

Marie Delahaye. — The Duc de Morny. — Blackmailing Extraordinary; or, the Biter Bit. — A Lucky "'Tec." — Ten Thousand Francs for a Bundle of Old Letters. — "Professor of Female Deportment." — Marthe de Vère. — A Profitable Stage Career. — A Duel with Horsewhips. — Cora Pearl. — Marie Pellegrin. — A "Flyer." — "The Patent Meat Soup." — A Shop in Queer Street, and some Queer Customers. — An Indignant Lover. — Beware of Letter-Writing. — Inopportune Return. — Victor Cochinat. — A Scientific Experiment; the Negro will Turn White All Over. — Flute and Cornet. — Blanche Pierson. — Safeguard your... capital. — Two Hundred Thousand Francs for a Maidenhead. — A Doctor who Knew his Way About. — A Valuable Certificate for Mons. Solar. — First Night of "Cotillon." — A Battle-Royal; Dance or no Dance. — A Remakable Summing-Up.

Marie Delahaye was another blonde, as fair-haired and blue-eyed as Hortense herself—of whom I shall gossip in the next chapter. It was because of Marie with the golden locks that the Duc d'Aumale once wrote to the Prince de Joinville, then in Algeria, a letter in which occurred the sentence, "All Paris is in tears. De Morny is off to rejoin his regiment!"

Monsieur de Morny held the rank of Captain at that

time. He had long been the lover of the Delahaye creature, which sufficiently accounts for the fact that she had in her possession some hundreds of extremely curious letters from him.

He left her eventually for some trifling reason or other, for as everybody knows his motto was by no means that of the ivy, "*Je meurs où je m'attache,*" (I cling till death).

After the Coup d'Etat, which raised De Morny to his well-known position of rank and influence, Marie became common property.

In those days she lived on the ground-floor of a house in the Avenue Gabriel. At one time she was in the lowest of low water. For several nights running she had had never a "flat" to devour. Suddenly the happy thought struck her to write to De Morny, proposing to sell him back his compromising correspondence.

No answer was forthcoming. She made fresh applications, with the same result—silence on the part of her gentleman, now a Duke. Nevertheless, still undiscouraged, she wrote a threatening letter every day to her former lover, until the thing became a regular persecution.

Finally De Morny lost patience and made a formal complaint as to this attempt at blackmail to the then Prefect of Police, M. Boitelle.

A missive was dispatched to fair Marie, appointing a meeting at the Maison Dorée and a little supper, then a fashionable and select restaurant, now a cheap *café*. Thither she betook herself with all possible eagerness, and

found a most charming and agreeable young man, well-dressed and by no means bad form, awaiting her.

They supped, went to the theatre, then home to bed together; and Marie spent a night that reminded her of the days of her noble Captain.

Next morning, after the departure of her ardent knight who had broken countless lances, if I may so express myself, in the lists of Venus, she rushed to see if the finances of her client were on a level with his lubricity. Had he been generous as well as glorious?

She looked in vain on the night-table; in vain under the candlestick.

"The blackguard!" she exclaimed, "he's bilked me, and here I am without a thing to show for my night's submission to his whims and fancies!"

She was furious. Suddenly a new idea flashed through her mind, and she flew to her wardorbe. The famous letters were gone; but in their place there lay before her eyes ten thousand-franc notes (£400).

While she was at supper with the young man, who was nothing else really than a detective, other police emissaries has picked the lock of her door, burst open the wardrobe and stolen her letters.

She made a prodigious hullabaloo about it; but was presently given to understand pretty distinctly that it was only a short way from the Avenue Gabriel to the women's prison of Saint Lazare.

So you see it was no new departure when, in 1879, the Parisian police had my colleague, the gifted journalist,

who wrote under the name of "Fervacques," arrested on the racecourse at Longchamps, in order to rob him of the love letters a too confiding lady of rank had written to him.

By slow degrees Marie came down to frequenting the *cafés* on the Boulevards, and landed at last at the "Rat Mort," a restaurant and night-house at Montmartre. There her practice was limited to women, for this gay resort was the haunt of Lesbians. Marie had given up men, and put her garnered experience at the command of younger women, calling herself a "Professor of Female Deportment."

This did not lead to fortune, it seems, as she died miserably some years ago in a disreputable furnished lodging of the Rue Fontaine Saint Georges.

Another triumphant trull of those days was Marthe de Vère, who died September 23rd, 1885, in her rooms of the Rue Logelbach. Her real name was Esther Mordet.

Few women had more brilliant opportunities. She came out about 1845. Of a very good family, well educated and brought up, charmingly pretty withal, she eloped with an officer, who deserted her after the lapse of a few months.

In the course of her travels, she met an Englishman of enormous wealth, Sir Robert Percy, connected with the Northumberland family.

This Englishman fell head over ears in love with Marthe. He made her the truly regal present of a million of francs (£40,000) invested in Government securities, and later on

bought her a mansion on the site of which was built some years after the celebrated house of Madame de Païva.

To relieve the monotony, she appeared in a piece at the Théâtre de la Porte Saint Martin. She was so atrociously bad in her acting as to be outrageously hissed; never was heard such a row, and she earned a niche in the temple of fame—among noted failures.

This stormy start on the stage in no way discouraged her. She was faithful to the footlights for five or six years, playing any inferior parts that nobody else would look at. The fact is, the stage, for her, was a standing displayed advertisement, and profitable besides—so much so, indeed, that she made more than five millions (£200,000) out of it, though never signing in the books for more than a hundred and fifty francs (£6) a month.

One of her regular lovers, a member of her syndicate, so to speak, was a personage who played a very important part in politics some years ago.

Marthe was a woman of "spunk," as they say. In 1863, her duel with Cora Pearl in the Bois de Boulogne with horsewhips, made a great sensation in fast society. The precise reason of it remains to this day more or less mysterious.

Relations were strained between the two in connexion with a very wealthy foreigner, describing himself as an Armenian and going under the name of Prince Khoras.

They had long been anxious to meet face to face. One morning both were on foot in the Avenue des Acacias of the Bois, going in opposite directions. They rushed

instantly at each other with unparalleled fury, and the blows fell like hail. The bystanders made no attempt at interference, and after a desperate fight which lasted a good quarter of an hour, the two combatants, battered and bleeding, had to stop from sheer exhaustion.

Cora Pearl was reduced to such a lamentable state of dilapidation that it was more than two months before she could leave her room.

The redoubtable Armenian left them both in the lurch in favour of beautiful Barucci—of whom more anon. From her he borrowed two hundred thousand francs (£8000), and then faded into thin air without saying when he would be back.

The next prostituted pearl of great price I shall take the liberty of presenting to your notice, is Marie Pellegrin, who was all her life on the borderland of the A1 cocottes, but without ever succeeding in making a lodgement there. The first-class easy-going nymphs have an aristocracy of their own, just as exclusive as that whose names are inscribed in the "Almanach de Gotha."

The Pellegrin pet was nothing if not capricious, so versatile—not to say light-headed—as to be totally incapable of sticking to any one idea for two hours running, or to any man for more than three days, no matter what advantages he might have to offer her.

To "go the pace," to "keep the pot a-boiling," to use her own favourite expressions, was the end and aim of her life.

So heedless was she of money that she would turn away

a serious protector, like F..., who often gave her sums of ten thousand francs (£400), to go and eat fried fish at the Halles or a fish dinner in some low riverside wine-shop with her fancy boy of the moment.

Marie was the child of a *concierge* in the Rue de Taranne; her father being a tinman by trade. At ten, she joined the elementary dancing class at the Opera, but by the time she was thirteen she had had enough of it. Nor is it to be wondered at—snubs and reprimands every hour and the dunce's cap three or four times a day ; a dog's life when all's said and done.

At fifteen or thereabouts she came across a musician, leader of the orchestra at a fashionable dancing-saloon, and one fine day she was missing from the maternal establishment in the Rue de Taranne. In her lover's orchestra was a certain good-looking cornet player; so she promptly left the leader and stuck to the subordinate.

She made her *début* at the Prado—a public ball—in preference to the Opera, liking the life of a high-kicking *can-can prima donna* better than the classical glory of a Taglioni.

A well-known man about town, T..... by name, to start an opposition to the famous and much advertised Liebig and still more to give his adored Marie a social position, bought the patent rights of another portable gravy, called the "Patent Meat Soup," just put on the market.

He fitted up a sumptuous shop for its sale in the Boulevard Haussmann, at the corner of the Boulevard Malesherbes.

Marie, gorgeously dressed, sat in state behind the

counter, and to induce the public to appreciate the merits of the "Patent Soup," distributed cups of that dainty at twopence a-piece.

Customers could even have a glass of delicious Madeira or Bordeaux at a very moderate figure, by way of course of advertising the famous *consommé*.

It was a funny piece of commercial entreprise—not likely to be soon repeated, I should suppose.

From the Elysée Montmartre to Brébant, from the Helder to the Café de Madrid, the news flew like a trail of gunpowder, and endless were the comments.

"Marie Pellegrin is reforming! Marie Pellegrin has grown respectable! She's bought a business—keeps a large shop on the Boulevard Haussmann!"

It was a strange hen-coop. There was Alice from Provence; Finette, an eccentric French quadrille dancer, who afterwards came out at the London Alhambra; Rigolboche; Moutonnet, the Queen of Lesbos; Amandine and her little "dolly wife," Fifine Redlips; Clara Blum, allied to a Jewish family, the Brache tribe; who have all been cocottes from the cradle, "The Beautiful Polish Woman," — a voluptuous procession of scented strumpets, forming, in fact, the whole boiling of the fashionable priestesses of Priapus, the brightest stars in the firmament of gay Paris, made the soup-shop their general place of meeting.

While some went inside, others took their stand on the pavement, looking in curiously through the windows. If a staid burgess matron ever ventured into the broth em-

[illegible]. It was never many seconds before she rushed out again, astonished, terrified and affronted. On the other hand, if it was a man, he was soon laughing, fit to burst his braces, finding himself surrounded by a whole troop of prostitutes, and when he came out again, he generally had one [illegible] hanging on his arm. N.B. This sample of "Potage Soup" cost him more than twopence a cup.

Marie, who had anticipated out of her own head the famous saying that Clémenceau, a forgotten politician of the Second Empire, attempted to impress that poor dreamer, Napoleon III.: "Sire, act on the grandest scale!" said one day to F..... "We must do things on a grand scale!" [illegible] agreed. She then proceeded to supply with the soup [illegible] of Cork ham, which she called "York" [illegible] of Strasburg liver. Of course friends paid [illegible], and some very good bottles of Bordeaux, Mâcon, Madeira and Champagne were drunk each day, and there [illegible] hundred and fifty sandwiches eaten!

[illegible] "Potage Meat Soup" could not last [illegible] long, and at the end of six weeks the place was closed. Still Marie was always proud of having presided [illegible], and to her dying day was fond of saying *à propos* of everything or nothing:

"Ah, mi! You should have seen me behind my counter, in the Boulevard Haussmann!"

She [illegible] began her old reckless, happy-go-lucky life again. The Comte de L..... took her with him to Italy. Naturally, the instant she arrived at Turin, an Italian nobleman, the Comte de F..... paid her pressing attentions,

but for the time being and on this occasion only got no further than a platonic flirtation.

At Naples the two of them, Marie and her French Comte, were received with charming hospitality by Joseph Achard, a Frenchman whose family has been settled in the Italian peninsula since Murat.

The couple revelled in delicious cruising round the Bay of Naples, varied by trips to Pausilippo, Castellamare, Pompeii, and all the neighbouring places of interest. Wherever they went, Comte L..... got the treatment he was bound to expect and was deceived egregiously over and over again. He never discovered a thing, curiously enough, till after his return to Paris, and then only by an accident.

On their arrival, after staying several months in Italy, the trunks were being unpacked. During this process a letter fell on the floor; the Comte darted to pick it up, read it and recognised the handwriting of his friend Achard.

The letter was too explicit to leave any possibility of doubt or illusion. He wrote a furious letter to Achard, accusing him of treachery. This was a big word to use where a woman of this sort was concerned, but the betrayed nobleman was only twenty.

Achard telegraphed a reply to the effect that he was taking the next steamer and would be at his disposal on arriving.

They fought a duel at Fontainebleau; and Achard got off with a sword-thrust in the arm.

They shook hands and made it up on the field of battle.

[illegible] apartments at the [illegible] to various amiable [illegible] These were not slow [illegible] weeks of merry doings [illegible] companion of Saint [illegible] was a little pig— [illegible] needless to add,

[illegible] prostitute was now [illegible] mention the fact [illegible] Turin—hurried [illegible] rooms for [illegible] wedding" gift, [illegible] piebald car- [illegible] formerly the pro- [illegible]

[illegible] may sound, [illegible]

[illegible] de F..... was [illegible] the Paris [illegible] the same even- [illegible] country- [illegible] protestations of [illegible] the train.

[illegible] found no car- [illegible] and could not [illegible] hotel seemed [illegible] pretty woman [illegible] and was

told the express to the capital would be going through in an hour's time. He took his ticket and was presently back in the busy town.

Leaving the station, he was driven rapidly to the dovecote. He had his latchkey with him and slipped in without disturbing the servants. Once inside he made straight for the bedroom, and found his mistress in bed with Victor Cochinat — a talented but ugly mulatto journalist.

Tableau!

The Comte made a terrible scene. Marie declared simply, by way of excuse:

"I was so tired of being alone, I went to the Folies Bergère, where I met Cochinat. I had been told that at the — ahem! — psychological moment, a negro turned white all over, and I wanted to see if it was true. But I don't love anybody but you, Charles, really!"

F..... burst out laughing. Meantime Victor was huddling on his clothes as quickly as he could; this accomplished, he left the room with leisurely dignity, bowing politely to the troublesome interloper who had prevented Marie from gratifying her scientific curiosity.

F..... forgave her for that time; but a week later he was on his way back again to Turin.

Strangely enough, with all her frivolity and caprice, she did not die poor after all. After a life of love — for men as well as women — she left a sum of money in the funds to her relations, and her country house at Saint Ouen, which T..... had given her at the time she kept the "Patent Meat Soup" store, to the cornet player,

her first lover, thus falsifying the proverb which says, "What comes with the flute, goes with the drum," — in this case the cornet!

Marie Pellegrin possessed both humour and good humour, as the following anecdote which is perfectly authentic, will sufficiently prove.

The Café Brébant was in those days the fashionable resort *par excellence*, the chosen place. Its aristocratic frequenters little thought that on its ruins would one day rise a common, cheap, fixed-price eating-house. One night the roysterers were all assembled, and making a noise fit to shake the roof off. It was midsummer and the windows were wide open, so that songs and laughter could be plainly heard from the Boulevard. The gaiety was at its height when Alice from Provence and Marie Pellegrin happened to pass.

"Shall we join?" said Alice. "I long for a little fun."

"Yes! Do dear," replied Marie. "If they're going to dance, that's what you like — so you'll stop with them."

"But you?"

"Oh, I shall wait a bit! If they're going to strip and enjoy each other, make me a signal from the window, and I'll come up sharp enough!"

At this old-fashioned game, indeed, Marie Pellegrin could have given points to Messalina herself, who is described by Juvenal as returning from the brothel, where she had been prostituting her Imperial sweet person to a succession of gladiators,

Et lassatus viris, sed non satiatus, recessit,
(And so slunk home, a-weary with men, but not even yet satisfied.)

One of the greatest wonders of the age is Blanche Pierson, who now — 1906 — is still at work, not exactly as she used, but still industriously labouring in staid dowager parts at the Comédie Française. I verily believe she is absolutely the very last of the battalion of beauties of the Second Empire. More than sixty years have rolled by since beautiful Blanche, one of the handsomest blondes of her time, first saw the light.

At about seventeen, she came out at the Vaudeville Theatre, then in the Place de la Bourse, being entrusted with inferior *rôles* of slight importance. It was all very well invoking genius; genius proved recalcitrant for the present, and seemed likely to remain so for the future.

Though nothing much was to be expected in the way of talent from the artiste, one could not help watching the gradual development of the woman, for the sheer pleasure of the spectacle.

I cannot really say whether virtue was a sentiment solidly rooted in Blanche's heart, whether she was a genuine prude; but anyway to safeguard her..... "capital," as Alexandre Dumas called it, from any little accidents, a hundred-eyed Argus watched over her night and day with a noble constancy of purpose.

This was her mother, who did not mean so precious an article to be lost without some adequate provision for the future having been secured.

The worthy woman well knew from a varied experience

that, the bird once flown, no charmer could ever bring it back into its cage again, charm he never so wisely.

Blanche, with all her "attractive young charms," was surrounded by adorers, each more enterprising than the other. Amongst her very special admirers was a certain Doctor D....., then a young man, who later became celebrated in connexion with a much talked-of case between him and the family of a young Duke, who had got into difficulties. Another was Solar, the well-known founder of the Discount Banks, as notorious for his extravagant display as for his misfortunes in the law-courts.

The Doctor was the favourite, but he was a poor man.

One day Solar said solemnly to Blanche's mother:

"I have thought it well over and definitely made up my mind. I will give two hundred thousand francs (£8000) to pluck the rose; but I make one condition. You understand the price is liberal enough to justify me in taking all precautions?"

"And your condition is?"

"I wish a physician to examine the young lady, and certify formally that every petal of the flower is intact."

"Nothing could be easier," the mother assented readily.

The same evening she communicated Solar's proposal to Blanche together with the condition he exacted.

"What!" exclaimed the latter, "he wishes my centre of sex hall-marked and guaranteed by the faculty. That's a little bit too strong!"

"So it is," answered her mother soothingly, "but then, think! A cool two hundred thousand! That's not

made every day of the week! Besides, best make your profit now; one day or other, you know, you'll inevitably lose it for nothing! "

Blanche, who was a very pratical person, saw the justice of her mother's reasoning, and agreed to submit to the examination— but on one condition: that Doctor D..... was to be the examining physician!

" But why D.... ? " objected her mother, on her guard.

" Oh! just because I have known him since I was a little girl. It will be so much less painful for me than with a stranger. "

On the appointed day, Blanche went with her mother to Doctor D....'s house.

Mamma waited in the sitting-room, while Blanche was with the doctor in his consulting-room.

A whole half-hour passed. The anxious parent began to pace the room, and presently to listen at the study door to see if she could catch an inkling of what was going on, for she thought the examination had lasted quite long enough.

At last Blanche reappeared, her cheeks suffused with a charming blush, that might be put down to the effects of embarrassment. The doctor who accompanied her into the room was as red as she was, and looked radiantly happy. The patient carried in one hand a medecine bottle having a red lable, with the words, " For External Application. "

" What's that? "

" Oh! only an astringent injection of alum, with a few drops of tincture of benzoin — just merely to allay any

inflammation that may result from the examination, which has been most thorough and conscientious!"

Next night, Blanche slept with Solar, who quite thought he was the first to quench his thirst at the source. The bird seemed in its cage all right — at any rate the door was carefully closed!

The story got wind some time afterwards. Naturally it only increased the young lady's reputation as a good sort, and she became all the fashion. Members of the swell clubs beseiged her staircase, and *billets doux*, bouquets, and little presents of jewellery were as thick as raindrops, when the "Cotillon" incident intervened, furnishing three whole days of pitched battle.

The Press announced the first night of "Cotillon," — in 1865, I think it was. Ever since the first rehearsal, Blanche had been in a towering rage. In one scene she was to dance some waltz steps all alone, and this she would not hear of. She brought to bear all the influence she could command, while her drawing-room was always full of sympathisers and a council of war sat there in permanence. Everything possible had been done to move the pig-headed manager, but he stood to his guns, resisting the remonstrances of the fashionable artistic club of the "Mirlitons," where the committee sat night and day. Yet no progress was made. These troubles seem inane nowadays, but it must be remembered that the liberty of the press did not exist. Politics were tabooed and the light-hearted Parisian papers fell back upon behind-the-scenes gossip and grew passionate over artistic questions. The same spirit

may be found to a certain extent in our Republican times, but parliamentary lobby intrigue is slowly swamping our æsthetic sense.

"It's a sure hit—must be a great go, I tell you!" repeatedly swore the director of the Vaudeville playhouse, with many a strange oath, "and Blanche is most ungrateful, for she'll have a double success, as actress and pretty woman."

It was all no use. Blanche Pierson stood out firmly. She would not trip the light fantastic on the boards alone.

"Why not the tight-rope at once?" she cried indignantly; and all her admirers—she had a few, mind you—repeated in chorus, "Unworthy of your talent, my dear—shameful, horrible, *indecent!*"

Eventually, as words were unavailing, Blanche's friends made up their minds to stop the representation of the play by force.

The first night, stalls, boxes, dress-circle, orchestra stalls, all were crammed. There were Dukes in the pit; while Diplomacy, Army, Navy and Commerce were all brilliantly represented.

Among the audience were noted, Comte de Bardi, uncle of the King of Naples; Wilson; Errazu; Grammont-Caderousse; the whole band of the Fitz-James's; De Vogué; Merlemont; Demidoff; Haritoff; Magnan; D'Estournel; Hottinguer; Prince de Sagan; the Seillières family, each in command of a troop of partizans.

As may be supposed, the atmosphere was a trifle tempestuous. The curtain drew up at last, and the first scraps

of dialogue could be heard without a murmur rising from the packed house, but presently the fatal moment arrived. The orchestra attacked the first bars of the waltz, *Il Bacio*, and Blanche advanced to the centre of the stage to execute the much canvassed *pas seul*.

Stallites and pittites rose like one man. Some drew enormous strident dog-whistles from their pockets and used them like a score of locomotives, while the rest of the audience shouted, "Hurrah for Pierson! Down with the play!" Suddenly, a little wooden footstool fell from the balcony, on which the stalls thought themselves attacked. The spectators promptly broke up the seats and retaliated, using everything that came under their hand as arms and munitions of war.

The police, and the military, with a Commissary at their head, tried to get the audience cleared out of the building, but failed utterly, and the fight only raged the fiercer.

Comte de Bardi, a perfect giant, was in the thick of the battle. They tried to tear d'Estournel from his seat, but he clung to it so vigorously with his legs that half of his *fauteuil* came away with him.

Finally, the curtain was lowered, and the police arrested about ten ringleaders, but they were released again almost immediately.

This infernal disturbance lasted over three evenings.

The fourth representation the piece was withdrawn by order of the higher authorities. The clubmen had gained the victory.

The *dénouement* was enacted at the Eighth Court of

Correctional Police. The summing-up contained some rare gems:

With regard to the Duc de Grammont Caderousse, who declares that the play was one of the worst he had ever heard; consequently he had no need to go back to hear it again next day, and still less the day following, and can only have entered the auditorium to create a disturbance, the Court condemns him to pay a fine of sixteen francs, and likewise one thousand francs (£40) damages accruing to the manager of the theatre as suitor on the civil side."

After these memorable three days, Blanche Pierson was more than ever the fashion.

CHAPTER IV

Hortense la Blonde. — Ran Away with the Exciseman. — A Railroad Marriage. — "I'm a married woman now." — Canting Heraldry. — An "Open Sepulchre." — The Duc de Morny and his Mistress. — A Pocket-Book of Secrets. — Small Causes Produce Great Effects; a Slap in the Face and the Coup d'État. — Cora Boyard. — Hot and Cold. — Henriette from Auvergne. — The Bohemians' Good Angel. — Berthe France. — A Street Arab in Petticoats. — "Silky." — A Common Councillor's Little Present.— A "Bit on." — A Noble Get-Up. — Madame de Metternich. — "Imperial Corruption, you know!"

This is how Hortense la Blonde left this world. In the year 1887, at nine o'clock in the forenoon, a pauper's hearse stopped before the outer door of the operating amphitheatre of the Charité Hospital. An old couple, man and wife, identified the corpse of a woman which lay on a bier of common deal supported by trestles. This done, the undertaker's man instantly shoved the lid of the coffin home in the grooves, and in a few minutes more the bier was loaded up on the hearse. The latter started on its way down the interminable Avenue de Clichy, and an

hour later the dead woman rested in the *fosse commune*—common grave—of the Ivry Cemetery.

Not a flower or a votive wreath was to be seen. Only a shabby cross of blackened wood, bought second-hand, marked the spot where the mortal remains had been left to rot of one who had been so well known in the gay world of fashionable gallantry under the name of Hortense la Blonde.

In 1850 and thereabouts she was at her zenith, a prosperous *demi-mondaine* of much experience. She owned a charming house in the Rue de Provence, and her horses and carriages were the admiration of experts. She was famous for her scathing wit, and was a merciless critic of her comrades in the profession of mercenary love.

She was a blonde—and no false one either—with hair as yellow as one of Alfred de Musset's heroines. With this, amorous as any Aspasia or Laïs of them all, past, present or to come.

She began in anything but a commonplace fashion.

Daughter of a rich miller of Etampes, she made the acquaintance one day at the *assemblée*—the village fête of the vicinity—of a clerk in the Excise. As may be supposed, the gauger pressed his suit pretty hard; she was a triply lucky windfall, being at once young, handsome and rich.

To ask her father's consent was out of the question; but the lady herself had an original and a happy thought.

"Why! of course," she told him, "you must elope with me!"

By next day, she had completed her arrangements for departure. They made their way separately to the Etampes

railway station, and each took a ticket by the Bordeaux express.

The fast train soon afterwards ran in. As it only stops a minute or two, they had to jump into the nearest carriage handy, which happened to be a first-class compartment.

In one corner was seated an old lady reading the respectable, priestly organ, the "Gazette de France."

Directly the train was again in motion, the young man accosted her thus, politely raising his hat:

"It is this way, madame; I am eloping with the young lady. Now her friends are certain to discover her flight almost at once, and will telegraph to the Chief Commissary of Police at Orléans; on our arrival there, we shall infallibly be arrested. As we wish to marry, I propose to do the thing—you understand, madame—here and now. You will be so very kind, on reaching Orléans, as to certify the Commissary to the effect that the marriage has been consummated."

"But, sir! it's an infamous thing—there, before my very eyes, without a thought for my grey hair?"

"Oh! Madame, your hair won't mind. Besides you can look out of the window. It will be a regular railroad express marriage—ha! ha!"

The old lady drew into her corner, turned away her head, made a screen of her newspaper, and said never a word.

Hearing no further movement. she hazarded a glance. Hortense, who was hurriedly putting her clothes straight,

and re-arranging the disordered cushions, thanked her and added with a look of effrontery:

"I'm a married woman now; why! it's the easiest thing in the world."

When they reached Orléans, just as they had foreseen, the Police Commissary was waiting for them on the platform, wearing his official tricolour sash. He made them leave the train.

"By all means," said the young man, "but first of all, please, ask the lady yonder who travelled with us, what happened as we went along."

The latter, on being questioned, related the scene that had taken place, and ended her narration with the words, "I assure you the young lady has nothing more to lose."

The pair were detained till the father appeared on the scene, to whom the Commissary in his turn retailed the information he had received. The poor man was furious and carried his daughter home again, after administering a sound kicking to the unhappy exciseman.

The paternal roof had lost all charm, and she had only one wish—to make tracks for Paris, which she presently accomplished, but without giving another thought to her first lover.

After a series of ups and downs, she made the acquaintance at one of the open-all-night restaurants of a young Count, who ruined himself for her sake and then blew his brains out.

No less than ten duels were fought over her, at London, Vienna, Saint Petersburg, and other places.

A second infatuated lover put an end to his life for her.

" If Hortense were inventing a coat-of-arms for herself, " that witty and spiteful beauty, Mdlle. Sylven, used to say, " she might very well take : gules, bleeding hearts on a spit proper, quaterly, a string of dead men's bones borne saltierwise, and azure, a chief semé besauntes or. This would be canting heraldry and very suggestive at that ! "

" Bah ! she's not a woman at all, " interposed another " dear friend, " Jeanne, with her viperine tongue.

" What is she then ? "

" She's an *open sepulchre !* "

Hortense's adventures quickly made her famous ; and she became the mistress of M. de Morny. The latter, who simply worshipped her, committed all sorts of follies, conceivable and inconceivable, for her, and chief of all ran deeply into debt, for he had no idea whatever that he would one day be vice-Emperor.

As she was a woman of insatiable passions, she had, side by side with the Duc de Morny, taken as her " fancyman " a young lawyer, secretary to a Deputy of the Opposition party.

M. de Morny was young, handsome and clever. Nevertheless she only endured him as women of her stamp do—put up with the " paymaster, " and used to declare with a cynical laugh :

" I have not sworn to 'love, honour and obey' him. He fills my belly, up to a certain point, but for the rest..... well ! "

" The rest..... well!" This void it was Jules's duty to fill. So every time an opportunity offered, she afforded herself a treat — but always discreetly and with proper precautions, for she by no means wished to lose the Duke, though willing enough to deceive him.

One night the Duc de Morny left his pocket-book behind by inadvertence in Hortense's chamber. When in the morning her maid handed it to her, the first thing she did was to open it and read the papers it contained.

Amongst these was a long letter from Napoleon III. giving M. de Morny his final instructions for the Coup d'Etat of December the Second, which was to come off the next day.

Hortense, who was no fool, at once understood what an important discovery she had made. Her thoughts immediately turned towards her Jules, the young barrister; suppose any ill turn were to befall him in the crisis?

Without a moment's loss of time she despatched a message to her lover, appointing a meeting at the "Sheeps' Trotters," a tavern in the Rue de Vauvilliers, then a bye-way lost in a maze of tortuous alleys, the present Halles Centrales not being as yet in existence.

She reached the appointed place half an hour late, and Jules was sick of waiting. He reproached her savagely in the coarsest terms for having kept him kicking his heels there.

" I suppose your Duke came to wake you this morning, instead of your maid? He assisted you to wash yourself and helped you to try on a new pair of garters?"

To this Hortense, who was pretty hot-tempered and had a sharp tongue of her own, replied humbly enough:

"Anyhow, he pays for them. As for you, why! if I liked being a pauper, you'd be just the man for me."

Enraged at the insult, he lost all control of himself and landed a formidable cuff on the fair cheek of Hortense with the golden locks.

She promptly returned the blow, and a general engagement began. Without stopping to repair the ravages her dress had suffered, she dashed downstairs, sprang into an empty cab that happened to be passing and was driven straight to M. de Morny's.

The latter, who had not yet noticed the loss of his pocket-book, was on the point of going out. He was astonished to see Hortense, and still more surprised when without a word she handed him the famous pocket-book.

He took it, and opening it made sure none of the contents were missing. This done, he calmly turned the key on his mistress, and made the best of his way to his brother's — brother the wrong side of the blanket, be understood. (1) To the latter he did not breathe a word of this little adventure, and took care not to restore Hortense to liberty till after the last act of the Coup d'Etat had been played out.

Small causes often produce—or prevent—great effects; and without the young lawyer's ill-tempered slap, possibly we should have had no Coup d'Etat at all!

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(1) The Duke de Morny is always considered to have been the adulterine brother of Napoleon III.

Another mistress of the Duc de Morny, Cora Boyard, who was no less famous in her day than fair Hortense, fell even lower than the last-named. From depth to depth, she reached the very bottom of the social ladder. Her head-quarters were established in a miserable hovel in the purlieus of the Rue Grange-aux-Belles, from which she would sally out to pick up belated workmen on their way home.

Brutalised by drink, poverty and wretchedness, she was disgusting to look at and even more so to listen to. Her dress was a collection of squalid rags; stockings she had none, and her shoes came from the nearest rubbish-heap. To confine her too redundant figure, or "tie up her guts," as the good people of that neighbourhood would put it, she used a rope instead of stays. She "worked" generally at night-time on the banks of the Saint Martin canal.

She was commonly known by the *sobriquet* of "Cold hand and hot hand," — a nickname that requires explanation.

In winter, she always carried about with her an old earthenware crock stuffed with charcoal-dust. This answered the purpose of a chafing-dish, so that the hand carrying it was of a genial temperature, the temperature of a greenhouse or orangery, while the other one exposed to the air was icy cold. The hot hand cost ten sous—fivepence —the cold fingers were much more moderate in price.

At the beginning of January, 1888, she was successful in seducing a mason from the path of virtue. It was freezing hard, and no doubt the attraction of the hot hand played an important part in the transaction. She enticed

the man into her lair, cleverly nabbed his purse, containing a pretty heavy sum of money, and put it back again in his pocket after emptying it. When the workman came to pay the ten sous agreed upon, he discovered his loss, had her arrested and carried to the police-station.

What eventually became of her, I do not know.

Henriette Rigaut, known as "Henriette from Auvergne," died in 1887, in the direst distress. She too had once been rich, admired and flattered; she too had once had her full share of youth and beauty. In contrast with most of her contemporaries, she was good-natured, well-informed and witty, fully justifying the old saying, "A bad woman, but a good heart." It follows she was not long in "wasting in riotous living" every farthing she possessed.

She could never get on with rich admirers. Her life was spent in Bohemian *cafés*, one day sleeping with a painter, another with a pressman. In fact, she neglected millionaires to cultivate the down-at-heel division. If she got a hundred francs (£4) from a "solid" man, it burnt a hole in her pocket until she had made a loan of it to some hard-up friend.

When disease came, ruin was swift and sure, and she died without one friendly hand to clasp hers or one word of consolation to help her on the long journey.

A strange type, if ever there was one, was Berthe France, who landed eventually in a licensed brothel of the Rue Sainte Apolline. Small and thin, as black as a mole and as

hairy as a monkey, with a nose turned up to such a degree the rain must have dripped into the nostrils on wet days, with diabolical wit and some education, she was the *beau idéal* of the street Arab, reckless, scurrilous and unfeeling. Her personality was a familiar one in the night-restaurants on the boulevards and in the beer-shops frequented by women.

One day in her presence the conversation turned on a certain newspaper girl well known on the Boulevard des Italiens, who had kicked over the traces and left her kiosque to take care of itself, and was now familiar to the world of gallantry under the charming nickname of "Silky."

"It beats me," said one. "When she sold papers, she was as poor as Job; how does she come to be so well-off all of a sudden?"

"Is that all?" cried Berthe. "That's simple enough. Instead of folding her sheets, she's unfolded 'em—and been asking a big price for her little coloured supplement!"

Berthe had one whim—to be like Madame de Metternich. A highly diverting adventure happened to one of my friends arising out of this.

Somewhere about 1877, Berthe, who was at that time titular mistress of a Municipal Councillor, visited the Brasserie Moderne one evening. About five in the afternoon she encountered the friend I have spoken of, whom I will merely call B..., to avoid offence. He is a Deputy holding an influential position.

"We'll have an absinthe each," she said, accosting him, "and I'm going to pay."

"*You* pay, my dear!" said B...." Have you come into a fortune?"

"Not I indeed! But my Common Councillor has just given me a thousand-franc (£40) note."

So saying, she drew from her pocket a bran-new bank-note.

They drank their absinthe, and B... offered a second. A third and a fourth succeeded, after which B...wanted to be off, the more so as the lady was by this time a "bit on."

"Wait for me where you are," said Berthe, however, "I'm going to contrive a surprise for you, my boy!" So B.... agreed to wait.

Berthe left the *café*, hailed an open conveyance that was passing and told the cabman to drive her to a first class ladies' costumier. Arrived at her destination, she said she wanted a cloak.

"But, madam, we only make to order," said the head shopman, who came forward to receive her.

"Oh! but you're sure to have something or the other to fit me," said Berthe. "I'm not at all hard to please."

She went slowly round the show-room, and presently spotted a magnificent cloak, a ball wrap of white cashmere, braided all over with gold lace and with a wide border of embroidered roses.

"That's the very thing," she exclaimed, turning to the shopman.

As it happened it had been left on their hands by a defaulting customer.

The assistant helped her to try it on. As she was very short, it was at least four inches too long.

"It is much too long, madame," said the shopman, "you must let us alter it for you."

"It will do perfectly well; I'll take it with me just as it is."

She paid down at the cashier's desk the sum demanded by the astonished shopman, who was quite unused to suchlike customers, and took her departure.

On the stairs, she donned the wonderful cloak, and turned to admire herself in a big mirror. The effect was superb, but she saw her hat was out of keeping. She at once took it off, tossed it into a corner, and proceeded on her way downstairs, holding up the two corners of her cloak one in each hand. She drove next to a fashionable milliner's and purchased a hat of reddish-brown velvet, as big as a soup plate and trimmed with an enormous red feather that encircled the whole erection.

Thus equipped, she was taken back in triumph to the Brasserie, where she found B..... waiting for her and now "full to the brim." He had had a couple more absinthes during her absence, but for all that burst out into a prodigious guffaw on seeing Berthe's absurd get-up.

"I promised you a surprise; well then! come along with me," she said excitedly.

"Where to?"

"To see my father!"

"You're mad, *you* are!"

" Not a bit of it! My people are the right sort, you'll see. "

So they sallied out. The victoria was still waiting at the door, and she now had herself driven to the Rue Maubeuge, to the big cookshop on the left-hand side. There she got out and walked into the shop. It was the height of summer and the place was full of customers. She selected an enormous fowl, strawberries, a melon, a bundle of lettuces, and had the whole lot packed in an enormous bag as big as herself. While she was moving about the shop, holding up her cloak all the time to save herself from tripping up, B..... for his part had got out of the carriage, and was standing talking to the driver. The latter was full of curiosity and was watching all the time through the windows what Berthe was after.

" A great lady no doubt, " he observed to B.....," you can see it by her dress. "

" Why, yes! " returned B.... quietly; " it's Madame de Metternich, you know. "

Several passers-by, on hearing this name, stopped and began to stare into the shop; then others stopped in their turn to see what the first was looking at. In short, in about no time there was a crowd collected over a hundred strong. The police, seeing the pavements blocked, came up hurriedly and demanded what the matter was; to this the cabman, proud to be driving a great lady in his vehicle, answered at once, " It is the Princesse de Metternich. " At this very instant Berthe was by way of leaving the shop, preceded by the proprietor in person; so the police

pushed back the gaping loiterers so as to form a double line with a lane between, along which Berthe stepped majestically to her carriage.

B.... who had taken his stand by the carriage door, hat in hand, in an attitude of profound respect, asked her where she wished to go to next.

" Rue des Partants, " she answered in a loud voice, " No. 145—next door to the—you know—the public sh-t-house ! "

Cappy whipped up his nag, which set off at a gallop, while the policemen made the crowd move on again.

" Well ! well ! " murmured the loafers and stargazers to each other ; " just to think of the great ladies of the Court—what a low lot ! That's what comes of Imperial corruption, don't you see ! "

CHAPTER V

Giulia Barucci. — Married! — A Long-Lost Husband. — An Extraordinary Caprice. — An Officer of the Guards in Top-Boots Only. — Paid on the Nail. — A Little Evening Party at Madame Barucci's. — Calzado and Garcia. — Cheating at Cards. — Clément Laurier's Account. — The True Story. — A Tell-Tale Card. — Proper Punishment.

Giusti, otherwise known as Giulia Barucci, was the very type, or rather the very prototype, of the complete harlot.

She said so herself at every opportunity, and her greatest delight was to declare with her strongly-marked Italian accent, which I shall not attempt to reproduce, " I'm a whore, I know ; but I'm the handsomest whore in Europe."

And she was quite right. She was a magnificently-made woman, tall and of ample mould, though possibly a trifle heavy. Her body was as white as marble, and surmounted by a relatively small head with beautiful rich curly hair. Two great eyes shone from under her black brows with a sombre fire that was never quenched, and which sent strange thrills coursing under the skin and along the veins of the coldest and most *blasé* of mortals.

The instant she came near a man, be he young or old,

innocent or experienced, he felt instinctively there stood before him the "eternal feminine," the womanly principle incarnate, ardent, insatiable, ready for all love now and for ever, ready to satisfy all comers, the most eager and the most vigorous.

If she lighted on a man of passions like her own, he was undone.

Paccard died of her, and the Count Posjenski no less.

Grammont Caderousse went to Egypt to die, by this means merely putting back the inevitable for a few months.

There was one thing, and one thing only, she was proud of—the beauty of her own body. She loved to lie stretched her length on her great bed, which was provided with sheets of black satin, and gaze her fill at her own perfection.

There were only three things in the world she really cared for—the male, gormandizing, and gambling.

Sumptuous as her toilettes were, she would never spend more than a quarter of an hour in trying on a costume.

At a time when Madame Musard, Cora Pearl, Crénisse, Caroline Hassé, Caroline Letessier, Skittles, Anna Deslions, Schneider, Lucile Mangin, Gioja, Soubise—not to mention others—used to be driven to the Bois in superb carriages hung on C-springs and drawn by pairs worth anything between fifteen and twenty thousand francs (£600 to 800), her turn-outs were comparatively speaking modest affairs.

Little cared she for a sumptuous frame, knowing what

a superb picture she was, and well aware that like Dejanira, she had only to open her tunic to make all men mad to climb on to the fatal pyre.

Giulia Barucci was married. No one ever suspected it, though later on the papers said her husband was an Italian tenor—which by-the-bye he was not. The anecdote that follows is confirmatory.

One morning, M. Haritoff, who was the man of the day, though he had not been that of the night—there had been some little friction among the accredited lovers—came up and rang at Giulia Barucci's bell.

Anita, the maid, opened the door, but refused him entrance, saying:

"My mistress told me to say, sir, that if anybody came to see her, she had gone out with Monsieur for the whole day."

"Monsieur?" cried Haritoff; "what monsieur?"

"I haven't a notion, sir!" answered the maid, "but if you care to come back again this evening, no doubt Madame will tell you herself."

At five o'clock therefore, Haritoff, accompanied by his *fidus Achates*, L... M..., who was three months later to become his brother-in-law as well, presented himself for the second time at fair Giulia's.

They found her solemnly seated before the fire.

In front of her stood a man, whose coat of threadbare cotton velvet and heavily-nailed boots contrasted curiously with the luxuriously-appointed drawing-room, leaning

with his back to the chimney-piece and smoking a horrible penny cigar that poisoned the whole place.

"Gentlemen," said Giulia, rising with dignity, "let me present my husband, Signor Jacopo Barucci, to you."

The visitors' amazement may be better imagined than described.

"What! Giulia," they cried with one voice, "*you* married! The thing's impossible, inconceivable!"

"Nevertheless it's true—as true as fate. I'm married—nobody more so. Jacopo is a bad lot; he beat me unmercifully, and it's more than fifteen years now since I left him. I'm going to give him some dinner in the kitchen, and at eight o'clock Anita will take him back to the Lyons Station again."

Though she would give no details to Haritoff, she was not so reticent to Mdlle. Soubise.

"Sou-Sou, my pet, I do assure you when I first saw him, I was real vexed. All the same I went to bed with him, and I tell you I was delighted. It was awfully nice! It made feel twenty years younger in a moment."

That handsome fellow D...., Lieutenant in the Body-Guard, was frantically in love with Giulia. He followed her about everywhere, beseiged her, persecuted her almost. The only puzzle is why she treated him with the rigour she did.

Presumably it was mere feminine caprice, for D.... was a really magnificent specimen of humanity, and she had a positive horror of sleeping alone.

At last one fine day, she said to her slave:

"Listen to me, my friend D....; you're not rich, barely twenty thousand francs (£800) a year, and you sleep with all the ladies of the Court who hate an empty bed as much as I do. Well! as you wish to sleep with me, I wish to see you naked, on horseback in the Champs Elysées. If you'll do this, I'll be your fond little wife for a whole fortnight. I'll keep perfectly straight all the time, and it shan't cost you a penny."

"I agree with pleasure," was D....'s unhesitating reply. "My only condition is that I may keep my boots on."

"Granted!" exclaimed Giulia at once; "but how are you going to manage, dear boy?"

"That's my look-out!" replied the *beau sabreur*; "but as I am set on having witnesses present, ask us all to supper to-night. It'll be quite a little evening party! I will slip away about five o'clock, and at six to the minute, if you will be at the window, you shall see me in the prescribed costume."

D..... was officer on duty for the week, and had to look after the customary parade of the regimental horses.

Next day at six o'clock—fortunately it was high summer; July in fact—the squadron of the Body-Guard was descried coming up the Champs Elysées.

Arrived in from of No. 110, D.... gave the order: "Squadron, halt! Front!"—and then rode out in front of his men. After a glance to right and left to see that

nobody was looking, he bowed gracefully to Giulia who was at her window, and at the same moment, by a rapid movement of the hand, threw open his long military cloak, beneath which, with the sole exception of his top-boots, he was as naked as Adam.

He drew his cloak together again, gave his horse to his Orderly, turned over the command of the Squadron to the Senior Quartermaster, and sprang upstairs to Giulia's apartments.

She agreed without demur that, notwithstanding the cloak, he had duly kept his bargain; and paid the penalty on the spot without a murmur.

Those were merry days. I have said she was extremely fond of cards, and it was at her house some of the highest play of the time took place.

De Grammont Caderousse, Radgenski, Calzado, Demidoff, Joubert, Wilson, Angel de Miranda, Garcia, and others of the same sort, used to meet almost nightly at her rooms, and before, as well as after supper, stakes of 1000, 2000 or even 5000 francs (£40, £80, £200) occasioned no surprise.

Players of this stamp scorned the modest limit of £12,000 francs (£480) prescribed at Baden-Baden.

Clément Laurier published, it is now some years since, under the title of "An Evening at Giulia Barucci's," the following startling incident.

On the 4th of February 1863, Mdlle. Barucci was holding a house-warming at a mansion in the Avenue des Champs Elysées. Unfortunately on this occasion, besides

the invited guests, who had been carefully selected, two professional gamblers, Calzado and Garcia, had slipped in. The pair of them in the course of a few hours had cleared out M. Angel de Miranda to the tune of a hundred thousand francs (£4000). Garcia held the cards, while Calzado suppled the money, played into Garcia's hands, and shared the winnings.

The whole story should be read in Laurier's speech for the prosecution. He appeared to support the demand for restitution filed by M. Angel de Miranda, and describes in detail how the cheat was detected and the extraordinary scene that followed its discovery. The company, as already mentioned, was distinguished, including Prince Demidoff, Marquis de Vivens, M. de Brimont, Baron de Noblet, Comte de Fontette, Comte Gaston de Poix, M. de Grammont. It was De Poix who noticed that Garcia, whose luck was phenomenal and who hardly ever lost, had slipped among the cards supplied by the hostess other strange ones. Garcia is called upon to restore his ill-gotten gains, and refuses point blanck. They proceed to search him, and all about his person, up his sleeves, inside his waistcoat, in every pocket, find packets of cards specially made up. His clothes were simply stuffed with them.

In spite of abuse, insult, even positive violence, Garcia refuses to refund the 120,000 francs (£4800) he had swindled the company out of. It seems at if the painful scene would never end, till at last M. de Grammont threatens to

send for the police. Calzado, who till then had kept in the background, advises Garcia to restore what he had won; and Garcia produces 50,000 francs (£ 2000), declaring this to be all the money he has upon him.

"Well!" says De Grammont firmly, "everybody must be searched."

At this, Garcia makes a dash for liberty; but is pursued as he rushes from room to room, head down like a madman, scattering bank-notes on every side as he goes. Finally he comes back to the main drawing-room, where he is surrounded and brought to bay. He is forced to disgorge everything, and when this is done, it is found there are still some notes missing at the roll-call.

Meantime Calzado had been called upon to submit to be searched; but refuses on the ground of its being *infra dig.*

"What! I'm to be searched—I, Marquis de Vivens!" exclaimed one of the guests, "while M. Calzado is too high and mighty. No! it's a bit too strong!"

The crisis had come, to give in or to be forced to; and Calzado hands over his pocket-book.

"Look you," he explains, "there are 14,000 francs (£560) in bank-notes in it, which I brought to the house with me."

But unfortunately, just as he is putting his pocket-book back, someone catches sight of a bundle of sixteen thousand-franc notes slipping out of the bottom of his trousers. The roll is immediately pounced upon.

"But these notes," said Madame Barucci to Calzado, "are yours too."

"No! that money is not mine," he reluctantly declared, appreciating the gravity of the situation, and seeing how black this last discovery made things look for him.

This atrocious scene lasted from four o'clock in the morning till eight. The account of it to be found in Laurier's speech is excellent, being written in such a natural and vivid style one seems to see the actors in movement before one's eyes. Garcia was condemned to five years' imprisonment, and Calzado, at that time manager of the Théâtre Italien, to thirteen months; the two together and conjointly to pay 41,000 francs (£1640) damages to the aggrieved parties.

Excellent as the account is in many respects, it is not strictly accurate. This is what really happened.

One evening when some high play was in progress, Calzado had twice left the table to go to the water-closet. Whether Grammont-Caderousse suspected something, or merely that he too had business there, he went to the door and knocked, without eliciting an answer.

Presently Caderousse, getting impatient, shouted;

"Hurry up, now! You seem to be spending your evening in there!"

At this, Calzado opened the door at last. Caderousse entered the closet and saw a playing-card on the floor.

He said nothing, but pulled the door to smartly and picked up the card.

A minute or two later, he returned to the drawing-room. They were just putting up the bank to auction.

It was knocked down to Calzado for 100,000 francs (£4000).

"Gentlemen," he asked, arranging a row of bank-notes, "is the banker allowed to double?"

He had barely finished dealing when Caderousse seized his hand with the words:

"Sir, you're a common thief!"

Everybody sprang to his feet amid an indescribable scene of confusion.

"My dear Duke, you're mad," remonstrated the players; "you're not yourself, my boy!"

"I said the man was a thief," he replied, articulating his words slowly and distinctly, "and I'm not going to unsay it!"

Then, turning to Calzado, and drawing a tiny revolver from his pocket, he went on.

"You made up a sequence in the water-closet; and you left this card behind."

And with this, he held it out to him.

"We shall search you," he continued. "If we find nothing on you, and if you so please, you may blow my brains out with this revolver. If we do, it is another thing."

Calzado was icy cold, yet the sweat rolled off him in great drops on to the carpet.

He was carefully searched on the spot, in spite of his struggles.

The false pack of cards was found all ready concealed under his cuff.

He was stripped, well pummelled and finally kicked almost naked down the back-stairs.

This was the last game of cards ever played in Giulia Barucci's house.

CHAPTER VI

" La Dame aux Camélias. " — Artistic Connections. — The Fair Glover. — Universal Satisfaction. — An Eccentric Lover. — Next Man In ! — A Mysterious Mourner. — Irma the Savoyard. — " Sweep ! Sweep ! " — Twelve Hours at the Crank. — My " Fat Friend." — A Faithless Muscovite. — An English Milord, His Chaste Salute. — The Contemplation of Nature. — Stage-Struck. — Nina Bouillabaisse. — A Napoleon A-Piece for Six. — The Lucky Coachman. — " Shall I put out the Gas ? " — Spy-holes Gratis. — Necessary Precautions. — " Made her Pile. "

Marie Duplessis, beter known under the name of the " Dame aux Camélias, " came originally from Nantes. Her father kept a large confectioner's shop in that busy town, 52, Rue des Verriers, at the sign of the " Shepherd of Nantes. " Marie was brought up at a convent school. She was on the point of leaving it to marry one of her cousins, when her father died and was found to be insolvent. As a matter of course, the cousin, who was more attached to the shop than to the lady, left her in the lurch without more ado. Never for an instant did Marie dream of going back to the convent. She took refuge with an old aunt ; but did not remain long in this safe retirement. Presently she induced the son of a rich ship-owner of Nantes

to run away with her, and they travelled together through Switzerland, Spain, and Italy. Her lover died very suddenly at Naples; but scorning to be cast down by such a trifle, she threw in her lot with a celebrated painter who had been their travelling companion for six months. Later she returned to Paris, and served the same artist as a model. Unfortunately, though a perfect model from the artistic point of view, she was far from being a model of virtue, and soon quitted her painter lover for a comedian.

This *liaison* shows plainly her goodness of heart. Her new lover was no longer young, and far from handsome; he was rough and brutal, and absolutely lacking in talent. Nevertheless she remained true to him two whole years — an eternity under the circumstances!

One fine day she disappeared. About the year 1845, she was mistress of a shop for the sale of gloves and perfumery in the notorious Passage de l'Opéra. The police were more easy-going then — though it is fair to say pretty female glovers were not so numerous in those times as they are nowadays — and the sisterhood could pursue their business almost with impunity. It is to be supposed she knew the size of her customers' — ahem! — hands, for she had an extensive *clientèle*, and might have said with perfect truth, like a boasting brothel-keeper, "No one ever left my premises dissatisfied!"

One evening a Spanish grandée, an ex-minister of Finance, visited her place of business and was so charmed he came again and again. Before long he succeeded in persuading her that the trade she followed was never likely

to lead to either fortune or goodname, and induced her to remove to a pretty set of rooms he took for her in the Rue Saint-Lazare. She hardly liked the sound of the name — the house of correction for women in Paris, is the prison of Saint-Lazare — which she thought decidedly ill-omened, but as the apartments were magnificently furnished and as moreover he offered her a carriage and two thousand francs (£80) a month, her scrupules were not of a very long duration, and she made herself at home.

The ex-Minister was far from being exacting in his demands. In return for the presents of all sorts and kinds with which he loaded her, all he asked her to do was to receive him from three to five each afternoon — but under special and rather remarkable conditions.

She was to be dressed in white, in a loose wrapper and a chemise of transparent muslin, hair down and arms bare, with white stockings and black shoes.

Then the eccentric being would arrive, always punctual to the minute. He would take a seat, and proceed to talk of the weather and the crops, discuss the latest scandal and hold forth on the question of the conversion of the Spanish loan. Finally he would kiss her hands, and then... take his departure as punctually as he had arrived!

Marie, free again, would slip off her white garments and away to her lover's to spend part of the thirty-three francs odd an hour she made so easily — certainly with far less trouble than in the back-parlour of her shop in the Passage de l'Opéra.

In consequence of a revolution in Spanish politics, the

ex-Minister was recalled to Madrid. Before his departure, however, he recommended her warmly to a friend, a Jew banker living in London. The latter carried her with him to that city, where she played her cards so well, that some time afterwards she returned to Paris the mistress of a large fortune.

When Marie Duplessis died, her decease was almost a public event. Ladies, of the highest fashion every one of them, visited the rooms she had occupied; and her furniture, when it came to be sold by auction, fetched more than four times its real value.

She lies in the Montmartre cemetery, 31st Section, in a rich sarcophagus, which all the year round is loaded with rare flowers. It is not old admirers who bring these flowers day by day, as might be supposed; an unknown and mysterious hand keeps the tomb beautiful from year's end to year's end. The great novel, by Alexandre Dumas the Younger, founded on some incidents of her life, is also responsible for the cult of the dead courtesan.

Irma the Savoyard's origin was an uncommon one among women of her class. At ten years old, her parents entrusted her to a master chimney-sweep, who used every year to import to Paris a certain number of poor lads, whom he then let loose on the streets, with a ragged cotton night-cap on their head, faces well daubed with soot, and sweeping-brush and brundles of ropes on their backs. These wretched little beings used to scour the streets, crying "Sweep! Sweep!" — but more anxious really to

get an occasional *sou* from the compassionate passer-by than to look for real work.

As to the girls, the master used to give them each a hurdy-gurdy and a monkey. Thus provided they could wander about Paris playing more or less indifferently on their nerve-torturing instrument, and making their wretched marmoset dance to the sound of the old, familiar chorus:

> "A la p'tite Javotte
> Jetez quelques sous,
> Et sa petite marmotte
> Va danser devant vous."

("Throw little Javotte a sou or two and her tiny monkey shall dance for you.") (1).

If the hurdy-gurdy proved beyond her skill, she would be given a barrel-organ, which she had to drag about on a little four-wheeled truck.

Irma left a letter behind her at her death, in which she recounted the story of her life. We extract a few of the more striking passages. These have been already made use of by the authors of "Paris-Lorette," a book published as much as forty years ago:

"To turn a handle for twelve hours on end every day of your life, to play a barrel-organ and sing in fine weather and in foul—especially in foul, in rain, snow and hail—the better to excite the pity of the public, what a life!

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(1) There is a slightly obscene hidden meaning in this old saucy song. If Javotte's "monkey" is translated as "pussy," the indecency becomes more apparent.

"I did all this till I was fifteen. Simply to think of it, gives me horrid cramps in the elbows to this day.

"A fat, middle-aged gentleman, used to follow me night after night on my road back to the unfrequented district where we lived, and with inexhaustible patience repeated over and over again for six months running that I was never meant to play a barrel-organ all my life; that if only I would listen to him, he would make a lady of me—in fact the usual rigmarole under such circumstances. So much patience, and such an air of podgy respectability, could not but touch me at last. So one fine evening I left my instrument behind in our garret, and quitted the old place never to return.

My obese angel was all goodness to me—a suite in walnut, pretty stuff frocks, hats at 15 francs (12/6), a stall at the Ambigu temple of the drama, cakes and ale, and red wine unlimited. But a very few months sufficed to teach me that a woman ought to do better than that for herself, and I began to long for mahogany, silks and velvets, a stage-box at the Vaudeville and iced champagne!

"I treated my benefactor with revolting ingratitude, and played him tricks—oh, endless tricks! He was just on the point of finding me out, when he was struck down by a sudden and fatal stroke of apoplexy.

"I went through the mahogany stage, and in due order reached rose-wood. A Russian Prince then promoted me to ebony and mother-o'-pearl. I was in the full swim of it, and was to have a set of diamonds—necklace, earrings and bracelets—when alas! my Muscovite left me all forlorn.

"To get over my disappointment, I went to London in company of an English lord—a millionaire, but stupide and tiresome to a degree. He longed, he used to tell me, to rescue me from the terrible life I was leading in Paris. He kept me shut up in a country-house, under the plea of making me forget my past and purifying me by the contemplation of Nature.

"Every morning Sir William would come to see me, greeting me with a kiss on the forehead, and used to leave me in the evening with the same chaste salute.

"When are you going to remain with me all night?" I used to ask him day after day.

"As soon as you are quite purified," he would reply in his harsh English voice. "Persevere, my child, in the contemplation of Nature!"

"I was beginning to be heartilly sick of the 'contemplation of Nature,' when one day a message arrived that I was to go to town without a moment's delay. Sir William had drowned himself—but I was sole legatee under his will.

"I made the best of my way back to Paris. Nature has made me passionately sensual, so that I was barely settled down before I took up with an actor. There's no resisting it; when I see a man all tinsel and spangles, in pink tights—well, I'm just infatuated! He was a *jeune premier;* but I had a second string to my bow as well, a rope-dancer. I cannot withstand a dear boy who has rouge on his cheeks and wears fleshings. I have committed follies enough, petting and spoilling clowns and harlequins; not disdaining a clever Pierrot, when I came across one, but the young walking-gentleman, the stage-lover with his silky moustache, the second-rate lady-killer who rants on suburban stages and in cheap playhouses, who rolls his eyes so tenderly, carols a plaintive ballad of love so sweetly—he's my fancy, my passion, my lech! What scamps they are too! Many a good haul of Sir William's money have they made—most of them. I do not regret it in the least, for with then if I 'contemplated Nature,' it was not, you may be sure, from the windows of a dull house in the country!

"When I had wasted my whole legacy in riotous living, I just set to work again. I've made another fortune of my own, and when I'm in high spirits, I sing this verse of the old catch I used to make my monkey dance to:

"J'ai quitté mon village
Avec mes gros sabots;
Maintenant j' roule équipage,
J' suis riche et j' porte chapeau!"

("I left my native village, with my clumping wooden shoes; now I drive my carriage, I'm rich and dress like a lady!")

Marie Duplessis was utterly uneducated; Mrs. Malaprop was a genius compared to her, but she was as fond of pretending to be a scholar as anybody. When chaffed

about her ignorance, she had one invariable reply always ready:

" I tell you I received a most superior education. Now look here. Your name is Maurice; well! I'm going to prove I know my Latin authors by an appropriate quotation. Here goes — *Maurice, tu ris, tu n'es qu'une sale tante!* (Maurice, you laugh, you're but a dirty aunt!)" (1).

Nina Bouillabaisse, whose nickname, derived from the fish-stew celebrated at Marseilles, proves that she came from that lively southern seaport, was originally seduced by a stockbroker. The latter, when he had enough of her, passed on his mistress to a friend, a notary at Lyons. The man of law, horrified at the scandals she gave rise to, packed her off to one of his cronies in Paris, who was a lawyer. Once in the Gay City, she dispensed with further recommandations. She sprungat once into notoriety, thanks to a supper she was present at one night after an Opera ball along with several young men at the Maison Dorée. One of the party asking her what dish she would like to have, she replied without a moment's hesitation, " Why! a *bouillabaisse*, of course!" and at every course demanted the dish of fish simmered in saffron sauce reminding her of her native town.

The sensation was immense, and the applause redoubled

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(1) A horrible punning version in French of the hackneyed quotation, " Morituri te salutant." *Tante*, in Gallic slang, stands for sodomite, so this explanation may perhaps throw a ray of light on the author's jokelet.

at each repetition. She was baptized "Bouillabaisse" on the spot, and then and there a score of generous offers were made her. Nina was a girl of sense, and reasoned thus with herself, "When I was just simple Nina and nothing more, all the lovers I had were scurvy fellows, each stingier than the other. All day long they kept the ball a-rolling. Morning brought a carotty chap; midday ushered in an beauteous auburn boy; evening was the signal for the appearance of a dark gentleman; as for the night, I ought to have had a turnstile at my door — and yet I was always in low water! I happen one night to ask for a dish of *bouillabaisse*, and lo! I am overwhelmed with a perfect shower of good solid offers. Well, well! as *bouillabaisse* seems to be a magic word in Paris, I'll make a point of invariably calling for nothing but my native dish at every restaurant I go to."

At the Café Anglais, "Waiter! a *bouillabaisse!*" At the Maison Dorée, "*Bouillabaisse*, if you please!" Everywhere for a whole fortnight *bouillabaisse* was the catchword of the moment.

On the Stock Exchange, "*Bouillabaisse* stands 120, ex div. — what offers?"

At the Club, "I'll toss you for a night with 'Bouillabaisse,' old chappie—sudden death!"

It was Nina Bouillabaisse who was the heroine, or one of the heroines of the following little adventure. It was a nine days' wonder, current, it is fair to say, not so much in ladies' drawing-rooms as in less reputable localities.

All who were in the swim of fashionable Parisian life

between 1850 and 1865 will recollect Monsieur L....., who was doubly and trebly a millionaire, and who won himself no little notoriety as a man of pleasure of very eccentric habits. His open-handedness with women was proverbial; he was the special Providence of all hard-up whores.

One evening L..... was supping by himself in a private room at the Maison Dorée, weary to death of his own company. It was a case, as Clara La Sardine used to say, of "extra special boredom at a hundred francs a head." Not knowing what more to eat or drink, nor to whose arms to fly for a little amusement — he had tried all the best-known Parisian lasses at one time or another — a mad freak suddenly suggested itself to his mind.

He summoned the waiter.

"Joseph," said he to the latter, on his appearance, "fetch me six whores."

"You *are* in great form, sir!"

"Go and do what you're told. What's my form got to do with you? Set about it, and look quicker than that, anyway!"

Joseph stepped out on the busy Boulevard, and picked up half-a-dozen "professionals" who were loafing on chairs in front of the different *cafés*, waiting for a "job." Three words put them wise to the caper, and in two minutes the whole six invaded the private room where the used-up millionaire was yawning his head off, fit to crack his jaw.

Joseph discreetly retired, and the instant the door was

shut, L..... set all the hired Cleopatras in a row and proceeded to examine them.

"So, there's six of you," he said, addressing them generally; "how much for the lot?"

"Five hundred francs (£20)," replied Nina Bouillabaisse, speaking up for the others.

"Too much! Give you twenty francs a head."

"All right! Agreed!" chorussed the darlings.

L... rang the bell a second time.

"Joseph, fetch up my coachman."

In a few moments, the coachman came in, holding himself stiff and upright, as coachmen in good families always do.

"See those six whores?" said L... to his Jehu, addressing him in quite a matter-of-fact tone; "I've paid for you. Giving you a treat! Now, my man, go in and win!"

"Shall I put out the gas?" asked Nina.

"Certainly not! I want something for my hundred and twenty francs!"

It was not Nina Bouillabaisse, as may be supposed, who reported the somewhat erotic incidents that ensued. It was the waiters at the Maison Dorée.

How did they know?

The explanation is delightfully simple. Waiters who itch to witness the scenes that take place inside the private rooms, have devised an economical way of enjoying the privileges of "spy-hole" amateurs, lecherous lookers-on, free, gratis, and for nothing. Indeed the thing

grows into a passion with them, described by Tissot in his masterly treatise on onanism.

What they do is to bore a hole in the room door and with their gimlet they make it so small as to be practically imperceptible. Then watching for the instant when the loving pair are getting into the sentimental stage which follows a good dinner, they station themselves at their point of observation, and in spite of the lights, see the full moon in all its glory, and all the other hemispheres of the fair sex, what time the occupant of the little room is toasting the fair sex of both hemispheres!

No need to insist on details, I imagine. But just as a prudent man will avoid shell-fish when dining *à deux* in a private room, he will be wise if he draws the portière, or door-hangings, well across the panels, to baulk the waiter's curiosity, and, if necessary, rig up a chair to keep the dingy tapestry in place!

Nina Bouillabaisse was all the rage for several years on end; then one fine day she suddenly disappeared from currency. The fact was she had made a very respectable pile.

Having packed up a neat parcel, she returned to Marseilles, and married there. Thus she was able for the rest of her days to enjoy her fill of the succulent dish to which she owed her success.

CHAPTER VII

Rose Pompon. — *Nunquam Polluta.* — " Precautions were in Vain. " — Who Pays the Piper? — *Pene Erexit Domum.* — Cora Pearl and Roqueplan.— A Momentous First Night.— An Aristocratic Audience. — Cupid's Bow. — *A Succès d'Estime.*— The Back of the Tapestry.— Napoleon III. and Cora Pearl.— Five Thousand Francs in Gold. — An Inopportune Diarrhœa. — " Naturally you Require Paper ! " — The Splendours of Other Days.— Catherine Labruyère. — Judicial Revelations.

Rose Pompon is one of the celebrities of the Bal Bullier — the famous dancing saloon and summer garden of the students over the water — and she was one of the most time-honoured " insalubrities " of defunct Mabille. The famous motto of the good town of Bayonne would scarcely apply to her; not her most devoted partisan could say of her, *Nunquam Polluta* !

She was so old, so very, very old, that all her contemporaries supposed her long ago under the sod, with " her toes turned up to the roots of the daisies. "

It was talking about her that a pompous paterfamilias started moralizing to his son, by saying:

"Ah! my boy, the women of the present are not to be compared with those of my day!"

"But, father," rejoined young hopeful, "they are identically the same!"

Anyhow, she is not dead, far from it. She has retired to an elegant villa in the pleasant neighbourhood of Argenteuil, where the roses bloom luxuriantly, and she has furnished herself a sweet, cosy nest for her declining years. Moreover her fading charms even yet sufficed to enslave one of our wealthiest financiers, who died only quite recently.

There must indeed have been considerable vestiges of the beauty that entranced our fathers in 1830, for her to get monthey fifty thousand francs (£2000) from M. C..., a man with a wide reputation for getting his money's worth.

Nevertheless, to judge by what current history tells us, this princely liberality failed to satisfy all her aspirations.

Old-fashioned in her habits, she was no votary of the Lesbian Venus. Instead, she took as her lover a young man of agreeable person and high birth. Him she loaded with favours, and coaxed and cuddled him like an old cat with one kitten, really loving him — in her way. He was her darling, her pretty little boy, and was pampered, made much of, and flattered accordingly.

The financier, who did not like the idea of his mistress whom he looked upon as his capital, distributing the smallest dividend, used to arrive on the scene unexpectedly, in his steam launch, sometimes in a cab or by omnibus. This did not suit our friend's book at all; so she organ-

ized a special intelligence department to warn her of an impending visit on the part of M. C...

A man in her pay was permanently stationed at the bridge of Argenteuil, a second at the railway station, while a third kept a look-out on the high road.

They were on duty day and night; but alas! no one can think of everything.

One day there arrived a drayload of cases of wine labelled for her and as coming from M. C..... She received the carter at the door herself. Presently, as soon as the wine was properly stored in the cellar, the carter came into the dining-room to get his delivery-sheet signed. In a comfortable armchair was seated in luxurious ease the antiquated charmer's best boy. She signed the paper and took out her purse to give the man the customary tip; but found she had nothing but gold.

" Bibi—pet! " she exclaimed, lovingly, turning to the young man, " will you give the worthy man a crown for me? "

" Too much, my dear! " said Bibi, who was a bit of a Jew.

" No! no! Give him the money, " she persisted; " it's old C... who pays the piper, you know! "

The carter, who had stood by during the little dialogue without moving a muscle, held out his left hand for the money, while with his right he whipped off his wing and spectacles. Tableau! Blue fire! It was M. C...!

The lady fainted — the last resource of every woman

who finds herself in a tight place. As for the young hero, he took to his heels incontinently.

M. C..... was extremely angry, and reduced the allowance from 50,000 to 20,000 francs (£2000 to £800) a month.

The " pretty little boy " is the proud possessor at present of a neat little villa in the suburbs.

On the façade, the observant passer-by may read the punning Latin inscription :

PENE EREXIT DOMUM (1)

One of the most notorious trulls of Paris during the Second Empire, was the Anglo-Saxon courtesan, Cora Pearl. The well-known newspaper, " La Presse, " wrote thus of her in some remarks signed by that smartest of Boulevard journalists, Nestor Roqueplan.

" Where does Mademoiselle—or better, 'Miss' Cora Pearl come from?

" From the Bois de Boulogne.

" And her master?

" Is Nature.

" Why is she coming out on the stage?

" Because such is her good pleasure, and she wishes to gratify the public under a new aspect. In the other, all Paris knows her as a sort of female Centaur, as the inventor of the complete art of amazonian horsemanship.

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(1) He erected this house by dint of { *penis.* / pains.

"She was the first female to appear on our fashionable promenades riding really good horses, which she managed with incomparable grace and skill, or else in carriages which the most competent observers held to be models of all that make and colour should be. Their general turnout, and the style and appearance of their harness were the subject of universal admiration, no less than the liveries and correct bearing of her *personnel*, amongst which there was usually to be seen a tiny groom whose youth and pretty looks made an effective contrast with his official gravity.

"All who really understoodhorse-flesh put Cora Pearl in a class apart—quite distinct from the awkward and heavy-handed horsewomen who would sometimes enter into rivalry with her. Their efforts were invariably ill-directed and short-lived, their stable arrangements poor, their servants inefficient, their animals showy but unsound—in fact the whole thing pretentious, temporary and of inferior fashion.

"For Cora Pearl horses are not merely a luxury, they are a science—and an exact science. A visit to her stables is a lesson in administrative organization, proving how absurd sums of money could be wisely spent on this one item of an otherwise senselessly extravagant budget.

"But there is method in her madness.

"It is enough to reduce to hopeless despair the small fry of sportsmen—and sportswomen—who keep one hack for all purposes, the most unportant being to gallop about fashionable thoroughfares, so as to startle and impress the

quiet burgess folk seated on the penny chairs bordering the pavement of the Champs Elysées."

On Saturday, January 27, 1866, Cora Pearl—her real name was Emma Crutch—was the means of bringing together all her friends, and their name was legion, in the elegant, though stuffy auditorium of the Bouffes Parisiens Theatre; boxes, stalls, dress-circle and amphitheatre, even the very passages, were crammed with spectators.

Boxes had long ago been disposed of at sums varying from 500 to 1000 francs (£20 to £40), temporary seats in the gangways were selling at the doors for four and five napoleons apiece, while the mere privilege of a peep at the stage through the little window in the box-doors was fought for with desperate determination by a host of competitors of all ages.

Never in any theatre had there been more startling toilettes, a more lavish display of flowers, diamonds and dazzling bare shoulders. The whole crowd of the "half-square" charmers who used to frequent the dancing academies of Cellarius and Laborde had met with one accord in this playhouse, where Cora Pearl seemed as if holding a reception. The best seats were occupied long before the rising of the curtain by the pick of the basket of fast and fashionable society. The indescribable flutter of suppressed excitement that always heralds a momentous *début* pervaded the whole throng.

Both sexes were well in force, especially the sterner, for ambassadors, Deputies, representatives of finance and

of sport had all made a point of honouring so seductive an invitation.

All sorts of distinguished personages were to be seen there—Prince de Sagan, Prince Achille Murat, Prince d'Arenberg, Marquis de Scépaux, Vicomte Daru, Khalil Bey, Mustapha Pasha, Duke of Hamilton, Prince Troubetzkoï, Duc de Mouchy, Ernest André, Garcia, Marquis de Caux, Vicomte de La Ferrière, Marquis de Mornay, Georges and Maurice Brisson, Raimbaud, Duc d'Acquaviva, Comte de Colobiano, Vicomte de Merlemont, Henri Cartier, Marquis de Modène, Vicomte Davillier-Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Angely, Marquis de Rennepont, Comte Ed. de Viel-Castel, Vicomte de Brimont, Vicomte de Turenne, Comte de Montsaulnin, Duc de Rivoli, Vicomte de Cossé-Brissac, Comte de Beaufort, Edward Blount, etc. All the best names of Parisian and cosmopolitan society.

To see Cora Pearl thus clad in an all but transparent costume beginning well above the knee to end low down on the bosom, with ample opportunities left between these two points for the most prying investigators; to see within a few yards of the eye, treading the common boards, transfigured by the fairy foot of the resplendent goddess, the fair being only glanced at hitherto afar off in the Bois, in the discreet light of an Opera box or a boudoir, never more than half perceived and that disfigured under the prosaic costume demanded by the conventions of a prudish and cramping civilisation; to have her there at last under the fierce light of a hundred pairs of

glasses she cannot escape this time; to gloat at leisure over her white arms, her elegant limbs and every one of her bodily beauties so long kept veiled, to revel freely in the luscious forbidden fruit of her beauty; all this was surely one of those unparalleled delights, those unique festivals, that make an epoch in a man's life; one of those special treats no one has a right to expect, and which seem incredible till they are actually enjoyed.

For more than a fornight past you might have discoursed in vain to the intelligent and enlightened men here present of Prussian intrigues, of the Eastern question, of the German Emperor's latest rescript, of the price of bread, of the abolition of newspaper censorship, of Jewish persecution, or Carlist insurrections, or of any other thing in heaven or on earth. They would have turned a deaf ear; Cora Pearl was all they thought about, talked about, or cared about. She and her visit to the manager of the theatre, and her sudden determination, so utterly unforeseen and unexpected, to make her charms a public spectacle, to present herself thus, half nude, to all the world, in the full glare of the footlights, to don the traditional tinsel and tights, sing her lines, come on, go off, obeying the beat of the leader's *bâton* like any ordinary *figurante* in rosy cotton fleshings — this formed the matter of thrilling interest and never-ending discussion among men of all ranks. On these momentous questions, as Gasparini said in the newspaper, "La Liberté," at the time, the thoughts of all Paris were concentrated. The evening of

this memorable Saturday was awaited with a very fever of anxiety and impatience.

The audience was already palpitating with excitement when the familiar signal preluded the rising of the curtain on the burlesque comic opera, "Orphée aux Enfers," music by Offenbach.

The heavy hangings of scarlet velvet opened, and Cora in person appeared in the costume of her part.

She was a Cupid—a Court Cupid of Louis XIV. style.

Flesh-coloured tights of the thinnest, lightest, most diaphanous texture — while a pretty cloak of blue velvet, embroidered and fringed with gold, hung gracefully from her shoulders.

Wings of blue, white, and gold; sandals with yellow ribands fastened over the instep and round the ankles; flowing artificial locks clustering in ringlets on her shapely head and falling on her lovely neck.

The male part of the audience gazed, and gazed again with dilated eyeballs, and the concupiscent men found the vision entrancing.

The front of her dress was literally one mass of diamonds; there was a diamond aigrette in her hair, garlands and loops of diamonds everywhere and she wore a diamond girdle round her waist. She positively blazed with the brilliant precious stones.

So far so good. Unfortunately she had to sing, speak, waltz, and worst of all, poor woman! look arch and saucy, in her part of the cunning boy, Cupid — one she probably thought much previous practice in private would

have made easier than she found it on the stage. She came forward all smiles to the footlights. There she stopped, and plucking an arrow from her quiver fitted it to her golden bow with a witching gesture. Alas! before aiming, she "hesitated and was lost." Derisive laughter was heard from several quarters of the house, and though her trusty admirers applauded stoutly, poor Cupid was put out of countenance, and the would-be actress mortally wounded in her *amour propre*.

Curious it was to mark the anxious faces and eager eyes with which all her lady friends in the audience watched *dear* Cora's efforts, and their secret satisfaction when they saw the *débutante* paling and shrinking under the loud, ironical applause that spelt at the best *succès d'estime* — in other more brutal words: failure.

The most amusing part of the play was before the curtain!

When all was over, one of my friends said, voicing the general disappointment: "What! *that* the woman so famous for her splendid luxury, princely carriages, magnificent horses and resplendent toilettes? But what of elegance, beauty, and shapeliness? What simpletons these grandees of finance and fashion must be! Anyhow, for once in my life, I've seen the back of the tapestry!"

Stilted gestures, a carriage without vigour, a voice without confidence and a deplorable accent — a lamentable exhibition altogether that makes us blush for the modern stage.

If Love had been built like that, he would never have undone Troy or ruined poor Eurydice.

Cora met with numberless strange adventures. The following, which has been sometimes told of another fashionable demirep, is, I imagine, not generally known. In any case it deserves repetition.

The Emperor Napoleon III., who had a fancy to spend a night with this divine Pearl of price, despatched as his ambassador General Fleury, whom we have all heard of as being his Majesty's Purveyor-in-Chief. As may be supposed, the preliminary negociations did not take long, and not a word was said about the price. The Sovereign's generosity in certain quarters was proverbial.

On the appointed evening, the Anglo-Saxon strumpet was admitted into the Tuileries. Whether it was she had not properly digested her dinner, or that the excitement of sharing the Imperial couch was too much for her, at any rate she had to get up repeatedly during the night, a victim to violent diarrhœa. Next day she was taken home again, in the celebrated brougham reserved exclusively for this purpose.

In the course of the morning, the dignified Director of Her Majesty's Pleasures brought her a sum of five thousand francs (£200) *in gold*. She made a face that sufficiently expressed her feelings.

"Is that all you bring me?" she said. "How much have you kept for your own commission?"

"Not a farthing, madame!"

"Ah, well! take back your money. I don't want it."

General Fleury left the house and reported the result of his mission to the Emperor.

"So! she doesn't think it enough," he said on hearing what had taken place. "Well! give me my coin back, and go and deliver to her these notes instead, fifty one hundred-franc notes making five thousand altogether. Tell her at the same time, 'Madame, you are quite right. The Emperor tells me you went so often to a certain place during the night, that you naturally require paper!'"

This notorious queen of cocottes lasted a long time after the fall of the Empire. She could be seen occasionally, the wreck of her former self, driving sadly up the Champs Elysées, in which avenue she inhabited a cheap *entresol*. She looked old and worn both in face and figure, and she pondered over the splendours of other days, when she possessed a charming private house in the quiet Rue de Chaillot. It was there that young Alexandre Duval, son and successor of the clever butcher who started the cheap eating-houses, called the Bouillons Duval, tried to end his days with a pistol-shot, because she spurned his youthful love. Since then, he has become a Benedict, but still remains a man of fashion. If I remember rightly, Cora passed away peacefully in her little Champs Elysées apartment situated over the shop where the Petit auto and cycle store was established later, and her death took place in the early nineties.

Such are time's revenges in this world of ours.

Another famous light of love in her day, was Mdlle. Labruyère, otherwise Catherine Schumacher. In 1866, she married a decayed man of fashion of the First Empire, whose tarnished name seemed destined to the last day of his long career to be compromised in shameful transactions.

Known by the name of Maubreuil, he had been Chamberlain to the Queen of Westphalia, during the reign of Jérôme Napoleon at Cassel. In 1815, being entrusted with a secret mission, but one the real aim of which was proved and admitted, viz. to assassinate Napoleon, (a pamphlet is in existence touching this, entitled "*Histoire du Soufflet Donné à M. de Talleyrand.* — "History of the Blow Administered to M. de Talleyrand.") Maubreuil met his former mistress, the Queen of Westphalia, at Montereau, on her way back to her father's kingdom. He caused her to be arrested, and under pretext of reasons of State, stole her diamonds and other valuables. The year before, at the time of the entry of the Allies into Paris, he had ridden through the streets of the capital with a cross of the Legion of Honour tied to his horse's tail.

In 1866, being reduced to the most abject straits, to which indeed he had now been long accustomed, he consented to marry Labruyère. He was at the time just eighty-three!

Here are some curious particulars of the sum contributed by the lady as dowry:

Furniture of grand drawing-room . . .	56,150 fr.
Small drawing-room	21,020 —
Bedroom	25,750 —
Dining-room, servants' rooms, etc . . .	33,960 —
Furs	31,850 —
Lace	25,550 —
Jewellery	51,420 —
Thirty-six dresses, about	15,333 —
Underwear	24,777 —
Plate	14,483 —
Glass, porcelain, etc.	11,460 —
Contents of cellars	9,000 —
Carriages, harness, etc.	3,100 —
	323,853 fr.

Her personal fortune included besides 3000 francs (£120) annuity on good security, about 300,000 francs (£12,000) secured debts of various kinds falling due in 1871, and 3,800 shares in sundry Companies and Societies.

With all these resources of different kinds, there were ample means to regild the coat of arms of the old Marquis.

Of some people we say, Fortune came to them while they slept. Not so of Labruyère. It was while keeping others awake that the blind goddess rolled her wheel to her.

Catherine brought a son all ready made to this senile scamp of a Maubreuil, who lost no time in acknowledging the lad as his own, according to French law.

His golden dreams were bitterly disappointed. Within

a very few days after the wedding, Labruyère banished him to a dark closet, where he lived half starved and treated like a dog, bullied by the servants who used to beat him and call him "old hanger-on," and other still more opprobrious names. Meantime she began her old life again — lovers galore and the fastest of fast living.

Maubreuil, robbed, deceived, beaten, and indignant, petitioned the Courts for a judicial separation.

The case let the public into some pretty secrets! It came out that a respected lady, the Marquise d'Orvault, was daughter of a cabman at Montrouge, and the Jehu's son had been convicted of attempted murder and rape on the person of his sister.

Maubreuil went into retirement at Batignolles after the trial. He died in June, 1868, friendless and uncomforted.

A curious coincidence is that when the Baronne d'Ange died, her husband gave her a magnificent funeral, and he was the *only* mourner.

When Maubreuil died, Mdlle. Labruyère had a sumptuous funeral provided for her husband and followed in a hired coach as the *only* mourner.

She had important relations with the political world under the Empire, and was a woman of endless intrigues, like those revealed in our time during the famous Ratazzi-Wilson trial, when it was found that the latter gentleman, son-in-law of Grévy, President of the Republic, had trafficked with the much sought-after decoration for the button-hole, the Legion of Honour, instituted by Napoléon I. to reward bravery on the field of battle and since

awarded to plutocrats, authors, painters, actors, and even actresses! Under the Empire, hungry politicians and female go-betweens were able to hush up scandals before they had time to dawn on the horizon. In this Republican epoch, there is a free — very free—halfpenny Press, so that despite squaring a few mercenary scribes, truth does prevail — sometimes.

In defiance, however, of this principle, cunning Catherine had the effrontery to bring an action against a man of fashion to recover 100,000 francs (£4000). The case is a curious one in several ways; at any rate it proves one thing, that if ladies of the half-world are not much good, their patrician, titled lovers are not a whit better.

Her Counsel read to the Court the following statement:

"I, the undersigned, hereby admit my indebtedness to Madame C. Schumacher La Bruyère in the sum of one hundred thousand francs, which sum raised by sale of her securities she has this day paid over to me, to be employed in my business affairs. I undertake to repay the said sum to her or to her order in five years from to-day, further undertaking till the actual repayment of the same, to give her interest at the rate of six per cent. per annum, payable every six months. In case of my death, the aforesaid sum would be recoverable immediately.

"(Signed)
"V....."

Appended: a formal Promissory Note, for value received in coin and a note of the Bank of France.

The eminent lawyer, M. Allou, then proceeded to read the correspondence between M. V... and Labruyère, with a view to proving that the Marquise d'Orvault had not hesitated to sue for the repayment of two bills for 75,000 and 15,000 francs (£3000 and £600) respectively under analogous circumstances. A verdict of the Paris Court, dated June 8th, 1867, declared these two bills null and void, with this preamble by way of explanation, "whereas the woman Schumacher, whose conduct attests in every circumstance of her life a high degree of skill and astuteness which has enabled her to amass a considerable fortune...; who belongs to a family in very modest circumstances, and leaves her parents to sue her for needful food and maintenance; who moreover in the statement appended to her marriage contract deposed to a number of alleged obligations due to her amounting to large sums of money, of which the origin is not adequately accounted for; whereas the said Schumacher induced an individual to sign the same, having first met him at a public ball, and after an acquaintance of a few days at most. Wherefore," the document proceeds, "the two engagements aforesaid are hereby declared fraudulent in law, seeing it is expedient, as well in the interests of public morality as of the honour and safety of families, to restrain reprehensible devices of the sort, whose chief aim is to cover the shame of certain flagrant bargains." The terms are severe, but their severity is justified, and were duly confirmed by the formal judgment of the Court in this fresh case, which following the precedent of the previous verdict, did not

hesitate to declare the bill of exchange null and void, and throw out the claim formulated against the father and brother of the defendant V.....

Maître Léon Duval's reply on behalf of the other side was couched in these terms:

"The bill in question for 100,000 francs (£4000) had a perfectly legitimate origin. V..... aspired to tender for the gas supply of the town of Evreux. He can prove he was in want of money, and that he borrowed it from Mdlle. Catherine Labruyère, who was not his mistress at all.

"My learned brother on the other side," he goes on, "has shown no pity for Madame de Maubreuil. It was within his rights. It is a principle recognized by the Courts that scions of good families are not expected to pay their 'immoral' debts, but they are to have their pleasure for nothing. A man eats luxurious little suppers, drinks good vintages, enjoys the comforts and elegancies of expensive rooms in the best situations, feasts his eyes on masterpieces of painting and precious specimens of the sculptor's art; in due course after a long spell of this sort of thing, he makes way for others, presenting his friends, and giving them an opportunity of tasting the same advantages. This lasts for years; but lo! if by any chance our friend signs a note of hand, instantly he becomes a 'poor young man who has got into bad hands,' he is 'the victim of an abandoned woman,' and the mistress of the house is left to pay all expenses and bear all the blame. But there is a Superior Court of Appeal — that of Public Opinion, that pronounces judgement on us all, the aggregate of well-

intentioned and right-thinking persons who live honourable lives. There, things are otherwise adjudged; fine professions go for nothing, once a man has enjoyed a woman's favours and afterwards shown his gratitude by coarse insults. All he gets is general contempt and abhorrence. All lawyers agree in the principle that promissory notes and similar instruments executed by persons in the 'concubinary' state — to use the legal jargon — are rightly held to be null and void; but they are all equally agreed that the 'concubinary' agent who exposes such things to regale public curiosity is the vilest of mankind. So far so good, but really I cannot see that this argues any extraordinary acumen of the legal mind, or that the conclusion is one to be especially proud of.

"I am quite aware that my learned colleague has based his morality on the verdict that has immortalised Vicomte de X....., and it is true that the Vicomte was at one time Catherine's lover, and that he signed a bill for 35,000 francs (£1400) payable to her. It is no less true that on second thoughts he preferred to make public his relations with her rather than pay up, and in one word that the Court has dissolved his obligation to behave as an honest man and a gentleman. But, granted that Catherine was weak and loving, I protest against the bill in question being called *pretium stupri*—the price of fornication. My learned adversary has followed the court in using the expression, but I think he is wrong in doing so. If Ulpian or Messala were with us, they would pronounce such a usage to be a solecism. *Stuprum* is not the carnal act pure

and simple, but in conjunction with aggravating circumstances, adultery, incest, rape, or some of those refinements of profligacy that can only be hinted at. But the Vicomte was not a debauchee of this sort, he was unrelated to his mistress and unmarried, while Catherine fulfilled the same conditions.

"Catholic theologians themselves have long hesitated to qualify as Sin the union of the sexes under venial circumstances. They are ready to go so far only supposing it the first time, and—let me add to make my meaning clear—*rupta virginitate i. e.* if the hymen is ruptured; but this is not so in the present case. In very truth, when I listen to people indulging in a string of platitudes on the immorality of love, I say to myself, there are men who have known woman only in marriage, and I admire them accordingly. La Bruyère was a professed moralist, and one of the best; here is what he says of the presents a man makes his mistress. As my learned friend thinks them so heinous a crime, it is probably for him that La Bruyère wrote the passage. 'It is a sad thing,' the writer declares, 'to be in love without possessing a large fortune giving you the means of lavishing gifts on the object of one's passion. A lover would fain make his mistress so happy that she would have no other single thing to wish for.' And a little further on, 'Sometimes we should make a concession to those we love, and have the generosity to receive presents.'

"M. V.... is presumably deaf to these beautiful sen-

timents; he prefers the morality of the award. He has, I suppose, a right to his opinion.

"Now that I have spiked the guns of the redoubtable verdict, may I be allowed to show how it cuts both ways as well? Now, Vicomte de X..... was fond of plunging at baccarat, and did not always win. One night he wanted, and must have, 50,000 francs (£2,000), under penalties the young man looked upon as worse than death. His bad character saved him. As he was immoral enough to have a mistress, the latter did for his sake what the righteous folk of the world would have taken very good care not to do. She handed him seventy-three shares of the Crédit Mobilier banking establishment, and seventy-five of the Bank of France, authorising him to sell these securities and use them to pay his debts of honour. The Vicomte was stirred by her generosity, and it was on this occasion that he insisted on signing bills to the amount of 80,000 francs (£3200), instead of the 45,000 (£1800) in which he was strictly speaking indebted to Catherine. This was equivalent to making her a present of 35,000 francs (£1400), —but subject to the condition that the bills would be met. Now there was no shadow of doubt that Catherine had saved X....'s honour and perhaps his life; but there was a great deal of doubt as to whether Society would suffer the payment of bills having this taint of immorality about them.

"As a matter of fact he refused to repay the 45,000 francs actually received, no less than the 35,000 which

were supposed to represent his gratitude. But, so far as the 45,000 francs were concerned, he invoked the sacred name of Virtue in vain; he was condemned at all stages of the proceedings.

"All this shows two things at any rate. First, that 'designing women' may have some good in them; and secondly that young men of aristocratic descent may sometimes receive 45,000 francs from their mistress; give a note of hand in acknowledgement, and then declare the latter to be waste paper. Anyhow, this is what Vicomte X.... did, and it is incomparably a viler action than the greatest faults courtesans are guilty of.

"You have been told how judgment was given against the Vicomte, but that he made no defence. We will leave aside altogether, if you please, the verdict and judgment thus arrived at. In another trial, long afterwards, this matter of the 45,000 francs was again brought up and threshed out. This was done with conspicuous thoroughness and mastery, as my learned opponent will hardly deny, for on that occasion it was himself who thundered against 'designing women,' and this is his special province. All the most brilliant advocacy could allege for Vicomte X.... was said, and the Court nevertheless adjudged that the Vicomte had received from Catherine securities of substantial value, and that he had been justly condemned to repay her therefore the sum of 45,000 francs. This verdict, it appears to me, contains a latent affront that must needs have spoiled any honourable man's satisfaction

in taking advantage of its terms. In any case it will teach M. V.... the necessity of proving his son did not include in the budget of expenditure on his pleasures the 100,000 francs (£4000) lent him to complete his little business transaction at Evreux."

Truly a pretty state of things all round!

CONCLUSION

A FEW STATISTICS

What becomes of all the *cocottes*?

From official enquiries instituted by the Prefecture of Police it would appear that, at the end of a period of twenty years, out of every hundred women of professionally easy virtue resident in the Bréda district, there are:

Dead prematurely of tuberculosis, peritonitis and other diseases, chronic or acute	17
In licensed brothels	18
Employed in menial capacities in same	8
Procuresses	6
Companions and chaperones to young apprentice prostitutes	8
Charwomen	6
Depilatresses	3
Looking after the hire of chairs in the public promenades	2

Keepers of wardrobe shops	9
Emigrated to America.	4
Have saved money and retired into the provinces	3
Married advantageously to foreigners . . .	2
Married in France	2
Fortune-tellers	1
Confined as lunatics.	5
Suicides from worry or extreme poverty . .	5
Suicide through disappointed love	1
Total	100

Unless indeed they are murdered, as happened to: Annette Tisserent, September 1866; Robert and Mage, 1864; Victoire Bodeux, 1865; Lévis, 1861; Marie Hélis, 1864; Marie Fellerath, 1879; Renoux, 1883; Benoit, 1865; Marie Jouin, Hélène Stein, 1885; Lucie Alliaume, 1886; Marie Aguétant, 1886; Marie Regnault, 1887; Marguerite Dubois, 1889; a poor girl known as "*La Chinoise*—the Chinawoman," 1889; Bigault, 1901; and Eugénie Fougère, 1903.

THE END.

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